IN OUR OWN VOICE

AN ORAL HISTORY of
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY'S
DRAMATIC TRANSFORMATION

1970-2010
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1970-2010
to

MARTIN LIPTON

—who as student, professor, trustee, donor, chair, and wise counselor has led us every step of the way on the NYU journey chronicled in these pages.
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A NOTE TO THE READER

Memory is imperfect. The editors made the greatest effort to assure the accuracy of these reminiscences, fact-checking whenever possible while taking into account that each participant has a distinct point of view. Then and now, dissonance and debate characterize the NYU story. The historical record also includes scores of issues, reports, and controversies that a single work cannot encompass. Although NYU’s tale of do-it-yourself reinvention continues today, every story needs a beginning and an end. This account presents selected voices of the many people who shaped NYU, from the nadir of the 1970s, when the University was days away from being unable to make payroll, until 2010, when NYU was becoming the pioneering global university.
PRELUDE:

DIFFERENT FROM THE START

In contrast, he wanted to establish “in this immense and fast-growing city... an education fitted for all and graciously opened to all,” a university that would be in and of the city. Above 14th Street, the Manhattan we know was farmland. Yet Gallatin anticipated a university for the urban future, an institution of higher learning designed to capture the fullness of human experience.

In keeping with our founder’s vision, NYU draws its life force from New York, a city open to immigrants and visitors from around the world, enriched by many cultures, embracing complexity, always striving. The same openness and striving spirit have animated our global ambitions in this century.

The story of New York University is among the most extraordinary in higher education, but NYU’s ascent to the top ranks was neither assured nor serene, as you will see in these pages.

JOHN SEXTON: In 1831, New York University offered a new kind of higher education. Like its model, the University of London, NYU accepted the charge of educating not only a small elite but the emerging middle class, drawing on the environment of a great city rather than retreating to a secluded pastoral setting. For that era, the choice was revolutionary.

Albert Gallatin, who with eight others founded NYU, could have fashioned this new university after any of the great universities of his day. As secretary of the treasury to Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, Gallatin knew Oxford and Cambridge, as well as the Ivy League colleges—all models of withdrawal, contemplation, and privilege.

JOHN SEXTON: President since 2002; Dean of the School of Law from 1988–2002; Professor of Law since 1981
1962-1975

JAMES HESTER

the Protector
Among the most perilous and transformative periods for New York University were the decades of the 1960s and 1970s. College campuses across the country were turbulent with student unrest over civil rights and the war in Vietnam. In the spring of 1968, massive student protests at Columbia University resulted in violent intervention by the NYPD. On May 4, 1970, during protests at Kent State University against President Richard Nixon’s escalation of the war, the Ohio National Guard killed four unarmed students and wounded nine others.

In response, students went on strike, shutting down more than 450 university, college, and high school campuses across the country. The sometimes-violent protests involved more than four million students. Outraged by their universities’ collaboration with the government on military projects, students turned their anger on what was often the nearest military facility—college and university Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) offices. Thirty ROTC buildings were burned or bombed. There were violent clashes between students and police at 26 schools, and National Guard units were mobilized on 21 campuses in 16 states.

A Rhodes Scholar and dean of NYU’s undergraduate and graduate schools of arts and science, Jim Hester was, at 37, the youngest of NYU’s presidents when he was appointed in 1962. Eight years later, it was his responsibility to steer the University through this era of turmoil.

In 1970, the University still had two campuses—University Heights in the Bronx and Washington Square. On May 4, several groups of strikers occupied the Loeb Student Center at the Square. The following day, strike groups also took over Kimball Hall and Warren Weaver Hall, home to the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences. Warren Weaver Hall housed a $3.5 million computer, owned by the Atomic Energy Commission and leased by NYU—a symbol to the protesters of University collusion with the military.

A strike coordinating committee presented its conditions to the University administration. Holding the computer hostage, the strikers demanded ransom money of $100,000 to be used as bail for imprisoned Black Panthers, members of the African American revolutionary organization.
8 9

JIM HESTER: We refused to do it. We went up to the computer. There was a hole in the floor under the door with a burning fuse leading into the room. The building was occupied by hundreds of students. The street was swarming. If the bomb had gone off in that building, which is largely glass, it would have been catastrophic.

CATHLEEN MORAWETZ: The computer was very big. It occupied the whole floor where the physics department is.

RICHARD THORSEN: It was a CDC 6600. There were only two in the country. The IRS had one, and the Atomic Energy Commission had the one at NYU.

PETER LAX: I was the director of the computing center. I could smell smoke, so I said, “Let’s run up and see what’s going on.” What was going on was a homemade fuse that was lit. The fuse was connected to flammable liquids on the computer. Two of my younger colleagues jumped in and stomped on it. Afterwards, my wife said, “Are you crazy?”

SIDNEY BOROWITZ: Sherrill and Executive Vice President from 1962–75; President from 1972–75; Present at the Heights from 1973–72; Dean of University College of Arts and Science at the Heights from 1959–75; Professor of Physics from 1952–90; PhD, Graduate School of Arts and Science, 1951.

KATHLEEN WEIL-GARRIS BRANDT: I was a young faculty member then. Hester came across as having a steady hand at the tiller. Very confidence-inspiring.
SIDNEY BOROWITZ: Hester is one of the loves of my life and has been from the moment I met him. He was just what the University needed.

GABE CARRAS: The composition of our student body was broad. It was not like the student body at Columbia, which tended to be more middle and upper-middle class, with a large number of more radical types. Our students were from the metropolitan area and took these things in stride. I don’t think they were less critical of the war in Vietnam or civil rights. But they were not going to go overseas in challenging authority.

RUSS HAMBERGER: They weren’t really that hard core. I remember they were picketing around the Main Building. Then, at 12, they took a lunch break—not what I envision one does when one’s a picket.

JIM HESTER: It was a bad time for higher education. A lot of people were turned off by the radical students and what they thought were weak-kneed administrators who didn’t call the police and lock them up immediately. So there was a diminution in enthusiasm and generosity toward colleges and universities.

There was also a tremendous waste of time spent on anticipating what the students would do. We were obsessed with avoiding violence, and that detracted from what we needed to be doing to build the University.

However, it was a fact of life. Most of us began to question the Vietnam War, so we had great difficulty condemning the students for having difficulty condemning the students for having the same feeling.

The good that came out of it was a greater unification of the various parts of the University. The good that came out of it was a greater unification of the various parts of the University. The involvement of the faculty and students in the Senate was amazing and brought a sense of responsibility toward colleges and universities.

The period of student unrest credit for bringing the University together.

I give the period of student unrest credit for the period of student unrest credit for...
Continued Hassles in Wash. Sq. Park

Greenwich Village Congressman Edward Koch last year made a commitment to increasing security in the park, asking NYU President Hester for his help. In a letter to the Democratic congressman dated October 19, 1971, Hester said he would be pleased to work with Koch on whatever he might want. “It is important that the Village be policed and maintained in a responsible manner.” Since then, NYU has installed new lighting in the neighboring area and Koch has been mugged. According to the congressman’s account of the incident, which he read into the Congressional Record, a threatening-looking individual stopped Koch as he was walking through the park shortly after 6 pm last May 4 and demanded a quarter. Koch says that when he refused the man said, “Give me a quarter or I am going to beat the . . . out of you,” to which Koch replied, “No, I am a Congressman Koch and I am going to have you arrested.” Koch said he then looked for a policeman in the park, was unsuccessful and finally stopped a police car on Fifth Avenue.

—NOVEMBER 14, 1972: WASHINGTON SQUARE JOURNAL

NYU's out-of-state enrollment has dropped from another student off the recruiting list.” Stories about muggings went all around the city,” says one educator, “we can scratch about the city.”

NYU needed tuition income to survive. NYU to increase its income via the tuition route was at the brink of insolvency. We decided we were in too bad a financial situation to give us the loan. NYU levies no tuition charges on students. State levies $550 (more recently $550) are also quite easily met by most families. There can be little doubt that efforts by NYU to increase its income via the tuition route are self-defeating. With alternatives so attractive, who will buy?

—JULY 1, 1972: BUSINESS WEEK

OPEN ADMISSIONS “WHO WILL BUY?”

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—NOVEMBER 1971

David Robinson, NYU’s endowment, when I came in 1967, was $10 million. Fifty million was in the medical school, and $25 million was in the Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine. NYU needed tuition income to survive.

Nancy Crocco: City College was a very good alternative to New York University’s private university tuition just at a time when NYU needed to make sure that its enrollment didn’t go down, when cost cutting was absolutely an issue, City University switched its policy to open enrollment.

In the early 1970s, NYU’s tuition was $2,450 a year. City University of New York was now open to anyone who had graduated high school—and free.

David Robinson: The banks typically gave NYU bridge loans so we could continue operations in August. [In the summer of 1971] they caused the University to pay attention. NYU used to run its fiscal matters in the following way: In June, they would go broke. Then they would borrow money from their bankers, and that would tide them over through the summer. In the fall, tuition money would come in, and they would last until the next June.

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In 1892, Columbia University trustees approached the University of the City of New York, as NYU was then known, to consider the possibility of a merger between the two institutions. While Chancellor Henry Mitchell MacCracken saw the financial advantages of such a partnership (Columbia College operated with a six-figure profit; the University, with a six-figure deficit), he was reluctant to give up his institution’s autonomy.

Instead, he returned to an earlier idea, which was to establish an “uptown” campus. MacCracken relocated the undergraduate college to University Heights, in the pastoral countryside of what is now the Bronx. He hired noted architect Stanford White, of the legendary firm McKim, Mead & White, to design the new campus. White’s father had attended New York University.

JIM HESTER: When Chancellor MacCracken moved the liberal arts college and the engineering school to University Heights, he thought he was taking the heart of the University out of the city, leaving behind a more urban-oriented institution, with the School of Law, the School of Medicine, the College of Dentistry, and the School of Education, or Pedagogy, as it was called.

JAY OLIVA: The Heights was the place where the University expected to move in the 1890s, leaving just a little module at the Square. It had a wonderful design by Stanford White and his company, very bucolic, lots of green grass, beautiful, classic architecture, football and baseball on grand open fields.

JIM HESTER: They started another liberal arts college, which became Washington Square College, to accommodate people who were coming to the University by subway. But the heart of the University, in his mind, was the Heights campus.
Great Americans was at the Heights. If I said Hall, almost no one knew that the Hall of Fame for Great Americans was at the Heights. If I said Hall of Fame to anybody, they said, “Copernicus.”

JILL CLASTER: The Cadillac campus for NYU was the Heights. Washington Square did not have that reputation at all. It was known that it wasn’t hard to get into, and didn’t measure up academically to Columbia, Barnard, or the City University.

SYLVIA BARUCH: I was in the first class of women at the Heights, in 1959. There was a fair amount of snobbery at the time—that the Heights campus was much better than the Square campus.

FRED ULFERS: I came here in 1971 from the University of Michigan. The NYU atmosphere was absolutely crazy from any point of view. There was a lot of tension in department politics. There was the Heights campus department. There was a department at the Square, which was my department. And there was a graduate department, which you were not part of until you achieved a certain degree of academic importance.

In department meetings, people were fighting constantly over issues of politics and Vietnam, over approaches to the discipline, and between those who were Marxist versus non-Marxist. I don’t remember any department meeting when I did not hit my head afterwards, saying, “Why have I come here?”

JILL CLASTER: In a lot of ways, its time was over. It had been an all-male school, which very reluctantly let some women in because they were losing money and felt they had to. To afford to maintain two campuses, duplicating departments and faculties.

SYLVIA BARUCH: The walk to the subway was not so pretty. It was Jerome Avenue’s train stop, down a hill, and you felt like you were leaving one town to go to another. The Heights was very isolated from its community.

JAY OLIVA: It was the beginning of landlords abandoning their buildings. The Bronx literally began to be on fire—because of the insurance money to be had. And there were quite a few drug-infested streets surrounding the campus.

FRED ULFERS: It was the beginning of landlords abandoning their buildings. The Bronx literally began to be on fire—because of the insurance money to be had. And there were quite a few drug-infested streets surrounding the campus.
We had very little endowment. We just... The Heights was losing $4 million a year. It was a case of deficits beginning to develop, but our expenses stayed the way they were. Lacking expected tuition income, Hester had to... These efforts probably delayed the day of reckoning, but they did not avert it. That day now is upon us.

—1972: FORD FOUNDATION REQUEST FOR GRANT ACTION

We started losing applications, so we didn’t have as much income as we expected. But our expenses stayed the way they were. It was a case of deficits beginning to develop, and particularly at the Heights. The Heights was losing $4 million a year. We had very little endowment. We just couldn’t afford that.

As negotiations began over the sale of the Bronx campus, Hester appointed a new committee consisting of six deans and gave it a sweeping job: to produce a plan (within 90 days) for saving NYU. The board at a university, if it’s an active board, has a lot of remit—operating the budget each year, lots of important policies and decisions.

Dropping the School of Social Work didn’t... It was a brilliant move.”

FRED ULRICH: I was in Gould Memorial Library when President Hester came up to make that announcement. We were all teary-eyed.

CARL LEBOWITZ: I became the acting dean of the School of Continuing Education during that period. The report should give a new sense of urgency to the debate over the higher education aid bill in Washington.

—MAY 24, 1973: THE NEW YORK TIMES OP-ED PAGE

Jim Hester in front of St. John’s Hall. He was the president of New York University from 1965 to 1972. He was a key figure in the university’s financial struggles during this time.
Reclaiming the City

There is Still No Campus Like New York City.

After next year, it is likely that all of our undergraduate schools will be consolidated at Washington Square.

Our classrooms are charged with the dynamism of the city. You step out of a classroom and you hop on a subway seat and there is no place on the train where people don’t talk or laugh or sing. It is not an easy school to go to, but it is worth it. Some students can’t handle it, and they transfer out. But many others transfer in to NYU from more secluded campuses, because they have discovered that what they want is what we and New York City have to offer.

For even with its problems—and there are many—New York is still the most exciting and stimulating city in the world, and New York University is the very essence of it.

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James M. Hester, President


Announcing the Sale of the Heights Campus

Sidney Borowitz:
The law was passed permitting the sale of the Heights campus in May of 1972, and I assumed the chancellorship of the University in June of 1972. Hester decided that the University was in such bad shape financially—they were about to go bankrupt—that he would have to appoint the chancellor from the people he knew.

Bob Harbinger: My understanding is we had a meeting when we were moving the payroll, and the endowment was basically used up.

Jay Oliva: I was the last dean of the Heights when they announced they were selling the place. I always said, “That was the equivalent of being named the captain of the Titanic after they hit the iceberg. Congratulations! You’re going to love this job!”

We take our stand with New York City.

James M. Hester, President

1973, NYU’s School of Engineering merged with Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn to become Polytechnic Institute of New York.

Larry Silverstein:
Of course, once that happened, a whole group of engineering alumni felt themselves disenfranchised. They suddenly lost their school and they lost their campus. Thereafter they wanted nothing to do with the University. Every time the University approached them to become supporters, they had no interest, always referring to the fact that their school was sold down the river.

They could never fully appreciate the fact that the University had to do itself the School of Engineering to make possible the sale of the Heights campus.
A year ago the University was suffering from a progressively fatal disease. We seemed unable to halt.

The achievement of the past year is that a difficult but feasible cure has been found. We are in the midst of taking that cure.

—SEPTEMBER 21, 1972: “THE PRESENT STATE OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY,” PRESIDENT JAMES M. HESTER

Among the first of the victims has been the Heights Daily News. For 39 years it stood as the smallest college daily publication in the country, a distinction we carried proudly. For want of several thousand dollars and because of a willful change that distinction is no longer ours to hold.

For the remainder of the year, the Heights Daily News will publish on a three-day-a-week schedule. We apologize to those of you who care.

—SEPTEMBER 27, 1972: STUDENT NEWSPAPER: THE HEIGHTS DAILY NEWS

JAY OLIVA: My job was to exit the campus. And to try to convince as many students as I could to finish their degree at the Square.

I didn’t have time to weep under the willow. The number of students piled up in the hallway to find out what the hell was going to happen to them, where they could transfer to, and was this going to hurt their chances of getting into medical school. You were trying to prevent chaos.

TOM FRUSCIANO: If you talk to people who went to the Heights, and they’re still around, they were extremely upset when they sold the campus. That was their NYU.

A Time To Conclude…

…A Time To Renew

The Heights News’ final editorial message, then, is neither praise nor blame, but a mixed bag of reflections and a guarded expression of hope.

Good luck.

—MAY 3, 1973: THE HEIGHTS DAILY NEWS, FINAL ISSUE

JOHN DESANTIS: We were actually heartbroken.

We loved the campus.

—SEPTEMBER 21, 1972: “THE PRESENT STATE OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY,” PRESIDENT JAMES M. HESTER

TOM BISHOP: Hester managed to negotiate the very traumatic sale of the Heights campus.

Forty million doesn’t sound like much today, but it was an enormous amount of money. It made the difference between life and death.

—SEPTEMBER 21, 1972: “THE PRESENT STATE OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY,” PRESIDENT JAMES M. HESTER

JOHN DESANTIS: Director of Technological Services and Special Projects at the Faculty of Arts and Science since 1979; held technical positions at the Department of Physics at Washington Square College and the Heights from 1964–79; BE, the Heights, 1970

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TOM FRUSCIANO: If you talk to people who went to the Heights, and they’re still around, they were extremely upset when they sold the campus. That was their NYU.
FRED ULFERS: Moving down to the Square was an adjustment. People were generally very welcoming. Finding offices for everyone was difficult, but we managed by partitioning offices that had been larger before. I never felt a sense of acrimony, of “Why are they coming down here to take away jobs?” There was a spirit of generosity, of we can work that out.

But there was one funny thing. At the Square, all course numbers were preceded by a W for Washington Square. At University College in the Heights, all courses were prefixed with a U. What to do? We didn’t want to give up the U for the sake of the W.

The glorious decision was made to meet in the middle. And what’s the middle between W and U? It’s a V—so that one could not say Washington Square lost or University College lost. For a long time, all courses at the Square were prefixed with a V.

TOM BENDER: I was hired at the Square in the field of urban history. Just before I arrived was the fiscal crisis of NYU. They literally fired every assistant professor, certainly every assistant professor in the history department. But the administration said, “We’re willing to hire an assistant professor in urban history because of our commitment to New York City.” That was my great opportunity.

One of the things that would soon change is that people started asking more of themselves and of the institution. That was a really important shift.

DAVE MCLAUGHLIN: To have New York University in one location at the Square was the right structure then.

JILL CLASTER: The Square was becoming more and more vital.

TOM BENDER: NYU was a rather unique place in that it had some of the strongest departments around and some of the weakest. The strong departments had some history behind them, like the Courant Institute or the Institute of Fine Arts. 

FOCUS ON THE SQUARE
Richard Courant, a Jewish professor and one of the most influential mathematicians of the 20th century, was removed from his position as director of the Mathematics Institute at the University of Göttingen when the Nazis assumed power in 1933. In 1935, he was invited by NYU to build up the department of mathematics at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Courant recognized the city as “a great reservoir of talent” and was very active in helping German immigrants find work when they arrived as refugees in the late 30s. The institute’s reputation grew, its renown eclipsing that of the University as a whole.

Richard Courant and Kurt Friedrichs paid a lot of attention to making the lounge as attractive as possible. People would exchange ideas informally. If two people look at a problem, each sees one side of it, which added together can solve it. There was always some bustling excitement.

DAVE MCALGAIN: My life as a research mathematician completely changed because of the collaborative atmosphere that Courant is known for. We had a group of applied mathematicians, many of them junior, who taught at the Heights campus in the Bronx and did our research at the Courant Institute on Washington Square. That group of approximately 20 worked together with incredible excitement and intensity.

When they sold the Heights, most of certainly those who were untenured in the math department—had to leave NYU. It was very disappointing. They were no committees to see whether we should or not. There was the sense that somehow or other we would survive.

PETE LAX: My principle as director was to maintain the balance between pure mathematics and applied mathematics. That was perhaps my best contribution.

PETE LAX: Hunter was very supportive of the institute. Although it was tough times, we hired some of our most brilliant people, like Charlie Peskin and Steve Cappell. We also took a group of people from the Heights and absorbed them.

There was a very strong collegial feeling at the Courant Institute. People were not to regard each other as competitors but as collaborators. In many universities, people come in to teach their courses and do their work at home. It became a tradition, and it still holds today: that people come in every day. They did their work in the office, and around lunchtime they would gather in the lounge. Richard Courant and Kurt

INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS GATHERING THE APPLES

The Courant Institute and the Institute of Fine Arts were world renowned. With the University now consolidated at the Square, the question became: How would NYU move from being a school with a few heretical institutes to become a first-rate university?

In some cases, a school, such as Commerce, Accounts and Finance, had to be transformed. There were also major gaps: NYU had no school of the arts. It had no real library.

To make such significant changes, President Hester needed the support of a very different board of trustees.

JIM MCCREDIE: We were physically separate from the rest of NYU, in the old Demme Drake house up on 78th Street, across from the Metropolitan Museum.

KATHLEEN WELL-GARRIS BRANDT: The Institute of Fine Arts had been organized very quickly, on an ad hoc basis, to bring Jewish refugee scholars out of Europe. At Walter Cook, the first director of the institute, said often, “Hitler shook the tree, and I gathered all the apples.”

JIM MCCREDIE: It was almost immediately the leading institution in the history of art in the world, made up of these émigrés from Europe. We were aware of the fact that we were the most distinguished part of the University. There were visiting professors from all over the country. Walter Cook paid for them, he said, by passing the hat.

The institute has always been of doubtful financial stability but managed to pull through. When the University was going down the tubes in the ‘70s, we had a separate endowment. At that point, the University contributed not a penny to the operation of the institute.
COMMERCE

“How Do You Take Advantage of Adversity?”

The undergraduate School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance had been established on Washington Square in 1900. Once a reliable source of tuition funds, with thousands of students during the day and at night, it had now run aground.

ABE GITLOW: When Jim Hester was president, the School of Commerce was in terrible trouble. The trustees had voted to discontinue the school. It had been a huge operation and a major cash cow for the University, a so-called school of opportunity—which meant it was easy to get in. Not so easy to graduate. As later discovered, by the third year approximately 70 percent of those admitted were no longer there.

Concurrently, the City University of New York changed from a highly selective institution to a mass admission, free-tuition institution. The economic foundation for the mass-admission model at the School of Commerce died there. The student body was collapsing. From 10,000, with 8,000 in attendance, it was down to 2,500. Half of them were evening students. By 1972, seven years after I became dean, it was down to 1,100. Then the idea was, How do you take advantage of adversity?

ERNST KURNOW: The goal of the School of Commerce was to make sure that when students graduated, they'd be able to get a job. The education was very narrowly gauged for students who wanted to become an accountant. When I entered, Commerce was the preeminent school for accountants. The Big Eight departments, probably the best in the country.

ABE GITLOW: “If you’re going to go into business, you need to understand intellectually, curriculum, faculty standings, student body, the whole works.”

BILL BERNERLY: I got involved in 1961, 62. There was a dinner for a professor, Marcus Nadler. I went because he was a great professor—a brilliant, brilliant professor of finance. He was really the big star at NYU.

ABE GITLOW: You worked hard, he had lots of time for you. You were a slouch, he had no time for you. When I entered, Commerce was the preeminent school for accountants. The Big Eight came and hired a huge percentage of the class. The school had unbelievable accounting departments, probably the best in the country. But Dean Gitlow said, “If you’re going to go into business, you need to understand marketing and management. You need to have a good, fundamental grasp of economics. And you can no longer be focused only on graduating to become an accountant.”

ERNST KURNOW: The reason Abe was successful in changing the direction of the school was that he listened not only to things that people said, but to good disagreements. Abe has the ability to make people want to follow him.

BILL BERNERLY: Abe was a get-it-done person. You worked hard, he had lots of time for you. You were a slouch, he had no time for you.

ABE GITLOW: “We have 150 new students,” he knew we were really on the march. “If we went from one graduating to become an accountant.”

ABE GITLOW: When Jim Hester was president, the School of Commerce was in terrible trouble. The trustees had voted to discontinue the school. It had been a huge operation and a major cash cow for the University, a so-called school of opportunity—which meant it was easy to get in. Not so easy to graduate. As later discovered, by the third year approximately 70 percent of those admitted were no longer there.

Concurrently, the City University of New York changed from a highly selective institution to a mass admission, free-tuition institution. The economic foundation for the mass-admission model at the School of Commerce died there. The student body was collapsing. From 10,000, with 8,000 in attendance, it was down to 2,500. Half of them were evening students. By 1972, seven years after I became dean, it was down to 1,100. Then the idea was, How do you take advantage of adversity?

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with students.

Dean David

“WHY NOT

INVENTING

SCHOOL

OF THE ARTS

US?”

RICHARD SCHECHNER:

a school of the arts, why not us?”

over the country schools of the arts were being

physical facilities, and we had the people.

And yet we did not have a school for training

actors, dancers, filmmakers, directors—and we had

the artistic vision. If any university should draw on the strength of the artistic

we were surrounded by creative people. If any uni-

versity should draw on the strength of the artistic

ideas had a chance to grow.

JIM HESTER:

was the place.

NYU did not have a very good reputation as an

elite school. But Corrigan convinced me to come.

NYU and its yeasty environment

The School of the Arts was

themselves in their own style.

Its purpose is not to create clones or imitators of

someone else's style but people able to express

their own style. The camera was startling to me. It was a Sony

Portapak, a very small, lightweight camera.

People didn't need large boxes and crates to

carry it around. They didn't have to be profes-
sionals. They could have their own voice.

The camera was a powerful new tool for people wanting to make

public access television in the cable locations around the country.

If people limit their activity to voting, they can't influence public policy. But if they can

make films about their concerns and put them on television, they find there's a whole commu-

nity out there of people who agree with them.

When I told him I was fascinated by this cam-

era, he said, “Why don't you just hang around

the School and see what you find?”

One story I like to tell about David: When Red Burns started here, David

brought her in not to head a department but

something called the Alternate Media Center.

I could never figure out what she was doing there. There was so little done then on what she

was concerned about—public access, computing for disabled people—that I just couldn't get it.

She'd been here a couple of years when I asked to

talk to David one day. “What is it that Red is really doing?”

He looked me straight in the eye and said, “I don't really know, Sylvia. But when the world

heard in the stairwells of the School of Educa-

tion. There were no classrooms. There were

practically—this is only a minor exaggeration—

In the ‘70s, the School of the Arts was

a world-class clarinet player, fabulous

vice president at Columbia Records. He was

dean, was a remarkable man. He had been a

administrator, fabulous developer of the school.

So, the administrative power. He was top down in

the arts. This was going to be a school where

there was no money, there was no money.

The miracle is that the school was founded

in 1965, and within five years it was on the map

David Oppenheim was the architect of that.
Tom Bishop: Hester began it all. Not that before him there was nothing, but before him we thought of ourselves as–let’s be kind— a second-rate institution.

Jim Hester: I was living about five blocks north of here and working on my thesis for Oxford in my spare time. I wanted a university library to work in. So I came down and asked a very nice lady if I could use the NYU library. She said, “Follow me.” She took me down a flight of stairs, under the Main Building [now the Silver Center]. Here was a big, dark space with a bare light bulb hanging in it, one table and chair. That was it. I never came back.

Tom Bishop: Our library was two floors in the Main Building—the basement and the ground floor. Which, when you think of it today, is so terrible that you can’t even be embarrassed by it, because nobody believes it.

Gary Carnes: It was dark, gloomy, no air. A dumbwaiter brought books up from the stacks. The hallway on the second floor used to be filled with people waiting for their books to come up.

Jim Hester: The Main Building was a big bull pen, a lot of little dens and chairs, no walls. No one was hosting a private conversation. It was like an office in a saloon-style establishment. I learned that hardly ever in the history of the University had a student and a faculty member had a private conversation. And I resolved once I became president to correct that situation.

That’s why I was so concerned to build a library where people could have privacy. Many students didn’t have quiet spaces to work at home. They were lucky if they lived near a public library. The opportunity for them to do their work at their University seemed to me extremely important.

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Jim Hester: We wanted an outstanding architect, so that the building would be something historically. Philip Johnson came up with this idea of a large atrium that would allow users of the library to feel they were part of a campus. We wanted a visual realization of the community of scholars. If you walk into the atrium, you see people working and the stacks all the way around. You can see scholars going about their task. That’s reinforcing of your commitment to their academic life. And it made the building come alive.

We were very fortunate that George Murphy, the chairman of the board, was able to bring Elmer Bobst into the picture. Elmer Bobst had a great love of books. He was largely self-educated, and he liked the idea of having a library named for him. He was a very imaginative and supportive man. And he was also a very patient man, because when he made the gift in his late seventies, we had to wait another six years before the building could be built. Johnson made a wonderful presentation to him. We were in my office in Vanderbilt Hall, and when it finished, Elmer said in his deep voice, “Jim—” he was a very tall sort of man—“do you have some whiskey here?” I said, “No, Elmer, but I have some across the street where I live.”

So we walked over to 27 Washington Square West, had a glass of scotch, and that did it. He gave more than $11 million dollars, which was a lot of money in those days.

Jim Hester: When the plans were presented, of course the neighborhood went crazy. Because it was a very tall building. There’s never been anything that tall on the Square. The height of most houses was four or five stories, and here was something that was going to be 12 stories and take up the whole block.

People were upset because it would cast shade on what was the southern part of the park where children played. There were all kinds of demonstrations. What happens in Washington Square is that the community does have some leadership, people who are really able to galvanize support and get together very effectively.

One of them was Jane Jacobs.

U.S. HELD MISLED ON N.Y.U. LIBRARY

Leader in ‘Village’ Charges New Building Will Be Used for its Stated Purposes

By Edward C. Burks

A Greenwich Village civic leader charged New York University yesterday with including too many fairy tales in its plans for a library on the south side of Washington Square. The controversial 12-story building is intended only incidentally as a library and is really planned as an entertainment building, New York University leaders said.

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Jane Jacobs.…”The real charge is just another preposterous thing from Stanley Saplin, director of community relations of N.Y.U. It is purely a library and study center,” she said. “This is just another preposterous thing from Jane Jacobs.”

—JUNE 21, 1966: THE NEW YORK TIMES

FROM BARE BULB TO BOBST 1964-1973

EMILY FOLPE

Attributed

IAN HOLLON

Former Director

Assistant Professor

Master of Washington Square

Assistant Professor

of Professional Studies since 2008

Vice President

Assistant Professor

of Professional Studies since 2008

President

Assistant Professor

of Professional Studies since 2008

Architect Philip Johnson gives a tour of the Bobst Library at NYU. (Left to right) Emily and Mamdouha Bobst and Jim and Janet Hester.

EMILY FOLPE: When the plans were presented, of course the neighborhood went crazy. Because it was a very tall building. There’s never been anything that tall on the Square. The height of most houses was four or five stories, and here was something that was going to be 12 stories and take up the whole block.
The president of New York University denied yesterday charges that the university was trying to bilk the United States Government by constructing a building largely for administrative purposes with Federal funds earmarked for a library.

Dr. James M. Hester, president of the university, said that the “highly vocal minority” that opposed the controversial plot to maintain the cornice line was an echo of a legitimate point. Philip Johnson’s concept was that the Main Building set the stage for the architecture of NYU—and that all the other buildings should be the same height.

Dr. Hester told a City Planning Commission hearing that 94 percent of ‘a building whose architects were Edward Durell Stone, Philip Johnson, Richard Foster and Elmer Bobst, and that the building was to be a part of a federally supported building. But he did not have enough clout to compete with the contractors who were building the World Trade Center at the same time. When there should have been 20, 30, or 50 people working on the library, there were two. We went months in this terrible condition while the World Trade Center was zooming up.

Another thing that happened was that Johnson prescribed the use of red sandstone for the outside of the library, in order to blend with the red brick buildings on the north side of the Square. We found that sandstone in a quarry in Massachusetts.

When the building was about halfway up, the quarry went bankrupt. We already had the stone on the building—and the quarry was shutting down. So we had no choice but to buy the quarry and run it until the stone had been completed. You just have to have faith.

Jane Jacobs led a major fight against it. She had been “assured by our legal counsel that we are on solid ground for starting to build—otherwise we will be wasting money forever.” The litigation had already delayed the building for more than a year. Dr. Hester said the plans had been “confirmed by so many public bodies,” that they were clearly legitimate. “The university regrets this discouragement,” he added, “and we hope this can be the end of it. Our intention is to be a good neighbor.” But residents of Greenwich Village who fought the library were not anticipating a thaw in relations with the university.

Jane Jacobs, the author and community planner, said Dr. Hester’s hope for friendship was “in vain.”

New York University, without fanfare, began construction last week of a 12-story, $16.6-million library opposite the southeast corner of Washington Square Park, after a two-year conflict that had stirred bitterness between the university and residents of Greenwich Village.

Bulldozers started excavating the grassy site for Building Is Proper

For NEW LIBRARY

N.Y.U. Wanted to Avoid

Housing Residants

No Ribbon is Cut

FOR NEW LIBRARY

— DECEMBER 24, 1967: THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Elmer Holmes Bobst Library opened on September 12, 1973.

SYLVIA BARUCH: My office was in Bobst Library on the 12th floor. Philip Johnson had not only created the building but also the atriums and the office spaces. It was really a big thing to keep your desk looking like he wanted it to look.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: The advent of the Bobst gift was transformational. It significantly increased library usage to a degree that astounded people.

And affected the life at the Square in a very positive way. People sat up, took notice.

JIM HESTER: The library was a statement on the part of the University. This was a serious, research-oriented, academic institution whose principal building was devoted to scholarship. It was a very dramatic moment to enter the library when the atrium was completed, to go up and see this enormous space so beautifully decorated with balconies and seating throughout the whole book collection of the University and the scholars who were using the books.

We had the administrative offices on the top floor, so I was in contact with that sight every day, many times a day. I’m very proud of the library as a physical manifestation of the purpose of the University and the effort that went into replicating it. I have wonderful visions of the library in my sleep.

TOM BISHOP: Hester was criticized because it was wildly expensive. People talked about Hester’s folly.

He had high standards, and the library cost a lot of money. But NYU had a library.

He was hardnosed. He knew what it took to move NYU from here to there.

Well, Hester had vision. It was not folly at all. He was hardnosed. He knew what it took to move NYU from here to there.

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HITTING BOTTOM
NYU AND NEW YORK CITY

Even the sale of the Heights campus in 1973 was not enough to stave off further financial trouble and a second crisis. Then, as now, NYU’s stability was bound to New York City’s.

TOM BENDER: That was a bad time for New York. It was services being cut. It was a time of crime, drugs—the two being intensely related. Break-ins in even good neighborhoods were not unusual. It was a very gray city.

DEBORAH BRODERICK: The city was a rough place to be. We walked around with “mugger money,” strategically placed nowhere near where you kept your wallet. For those of us who grew up and lived here, it was just a way of life.

TOM BENDER: One of the things about the NYU financial crisis: It came earlier than most of the other financial crises. All universities went into one version. NYU’s was particularly acute. They were quite fortunate, although it must not have seemed that way at the time, that they dealt with it much earlier, which was why when I arrived things were grim. Even some paint in the office would have been a good idea. But that meant that there were no more cuts. We’d already hit bottom.

GIVING UP on Big-Time Sports

Among the casualties of NYU’s severe financial crises over decades was Division I athletics. By the time Bobst Library opened in 1973, the University had so little space for sports that it used the roof of the library.

RUSS HAMBERGER: Everyone knows that the Heisman Trophy is for the outstanding college football player. But what many people don’t know is that an NYU football player posed for the sculpture of the trophy.

We had been big-time football, which they gave up in about 1970. And big-time track from the 1920s into the early ’70s. And big-time basketball. I am told we missed out on getting Kareem Abdul Jabbar, who was Lew Alcindor at the time, a New York City kid.

In 1971, after a 20-loss season, the University closed the basketball program. NYU had also been tarnished when its basketball team was caught in point-shaving scandals in 1951 and 1961.

RUSS HAMBERGER: The athletics department struggled for a few years to keep baseball without a field, because all the athletic facilities were in the Heights. They couldn’t do it, so they had to give up men’s baseball.

We had already given up athletic scholarships, even though we were the equivalent of Division I sports. So the swimming team practiced in a high school pool some place. The wrestling team was in the basement of the Weinstein Residence Hall. The fencing team was in the teaching gym at the School of Ed. Women’s basketball, which we still kept, was played in one of the teaching gyms.

Once Bobst was open, we built racquetball courts on the roof. There would be people in their shorts and T-shirts walking through the library to go up to the roof to play.
MARTY LIPTON: As we came into 1975, we had the confluence of imminent bankruptcy of the city and imminent bankruptcy of the University, somewhat connected because of the city’s problems but separate in economic terms. Governor Carey created the Financial Control Board and then the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) to deal with the city’s fiscal problems. Felix Rohatyn came in to chair it.

At the same time, the city was preparing bankruptcy petitions.

ABE BEAME: The dilemma of our city really has no villains, only victims. We have had a succession of administrations—local, state, and federal—which have responded to public pressures and political needs with new programs and broadened services, most of them well-meaning and most of them fundable in a growth economy. We have seen mayors, governors, presidents, and legislators use all sorts of fiscal gymnastics to find the means to maintain these services.

It was especially true in this city—which has a long and compassionate tradition of providing for the poor, the aged, the disadvantaged, who have always looked to this city and the lady standing in our harbor as symbols of hope. We're running out of fingers. We're running out of fingers. We're running out of fingers. We're running out of fingers.

FELIX ROHATYN: The dikes are crumbling and we're running out of fingers.

Ford to City: Drop Dead

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Big Rescues Can Work. Just Ask New York

Echoning those who maintain that “greedy borrowers” should get no help today, many in Washington in 1975 argued against a rescue of New York. Mr. Rohatyn recalled the spokesman for President Gerald R. Ford comparing New York City to a wayward daughter hooked on heroin. “You don’t give her $100 a day to support her habit,” the official said.

In late October, Mr. Ford gave his infamous speech at the National Press Club:

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President Ford had previously refused the city’s request for temporary federal funding to prevent the bankruptcy. About a week prior to Thanksgiving in 1975, he changed his mind.

The federal government enacted legislation that would provide funding if the city was able to get the banks and insurance companies that held city debt to roll it over so as to extend the maturity. And get the city pension funds to purchase some $500 million of additional city debt.

Through a set of unusual circumstances, I happened to end up as counsel to the city, to work out the agreement to roll over the debt and do an agreement with the federal government for the financing.

Rohatyn and I sometimes joke that people ask me, “How did the two of you get to be such good friends?” And I say, “It’s because we slept together for three nights in a row on a bench outside the Boot Room, City Hall.”

But eventually we got it all done. The city started to come out of at least the fiscal part of its crisis.

CAROLE RIFKIND: I do believe that headline galvanized people to feel proud about New York—the resilience, the ability of New Yorkers, of the city itself, to triumph over adversity.

MARTY LIPTON: The solution to the city’s fiscal crisis and resultant improvement in city living conditions contributed significantly to the concurrent improvements in NYU: proof that there is a symbiotic relationship between a great university and a great city.

JIM HESTER: After 13 years in office, it was clearly nearing time for me to turn NYU over to someone else. I had been approached by presidential search committees from other universities but had not encouraged them. It would be like entering into another marriage. Obviously, many have done both successfully, but it did not appeal to me.

And so I ended my great experience as president of NYU by announcing in 1974 that I was accepting the invitation of the secretary general of the United Nations to become the first rector of the United Nations University.

The world can be divided into those who love New York City and those who don’t. Those who love New York tend to be unusually lively people. They have to be.

New York University, by comparison with most other universities in the world, is a much more interesting place because of this vitality. At NYU, I was never bored for any moment. I think I’ve been one of the luckiest men imaginable.
JOHN SAWHILL
the Brutal Savior
1975–1980
“THANK GOD FOR LAWYERS”: SALVATION FROM A NOODLE FACTORY

1976

MARTY LIPTON: In 1972, I had become a member of the law school board. As such, I learned that the law school was getting very significant financial help from the dividends received from the Mueller Macaroni Company, which everybody at the law school thought was owned by the Law Center Foundation, a separate entity from the University.

However, the law school did not own it. The Mueller Macaroni Company was acquired by (then-dean) Arthur Vanderbilt in a transaction designed to help the finances of the law school, before the creation of the Law Center Foundation. Mueller was owned by the University, not by the law school or the separate foundation. Which, of course, caused the trustees of the law school to get terribly exercised about the jeopardy to this source of financing for the law school being lost in a bankruptcy of the University.

NORMAN DORSEN: The title to the money was in the University. The law school was not able, as a legal entity, to own the shares, but the money was in trust for the law school and the income had been spent for the law school.

MARTY LIPTON: I am not quite sure how I ended up being the trustee who was delegated to try and get the Mueller Company back for the law school. Maybe because no one else wanted to try. I’d had several conversations with President Hester, each of which ended in the rather unpleasant circumstance of his saying that the law school was trying to undermine his presidency and damage the University.

All of a sudden, John Sawhill came in as president. It was the day after he took office that I called him and said that I was a trustee of the law school and thought I was fully familiar with the fiscal affairs of the University and the problems we were facing. I thought there might be a solution, and I’d like to come in and see him.

He said, “Why don’t you come in tomorrow?” I met with him and explained that the Mueller Company existed and was quite profitable—and that I thought it could be sold for about $70 or $75 million. In order to help the University, the law school would share the

TOM FRUSCIANO: When Hester left and John Sawhill came in, you had a very good entrepreneur followed by a very good fiscal manager. Sawhill and Allan Carter, who worked with Hester, really put the clamps on spending.

University Survival: A Nine-Point Program

Sawhill outlines a plan for overcoming fiscal woes and moving forward. I might have used this occasion simply to mention, in passing, the University’s current fiscal problems and reassure you that everything is, and will be all right. But, that approach is contrary to my style. It is true that New York University’s difficulties are, to some extent, a reflection of the problems facing higher educational institutions around the country. But, we cannot permit that fact to divert us from a simple truth: that we must be the instruments of our own salvation.
proceeds of the sale with the University. But the law school was anxious to get as much of the proceeds as it could out of the University and into the Law Center Foundation to protect against the University’s fiscal problems. He said, “Well, how should I proceed?” I said, “I think you should appoint a trustee against the University’s fiscal problems.” I said, “I think you should appoint a trustee committee to deal with this.”

And he said, “Who would you recommend?” I said I’d recommend Larry Tisch. I disclosed that my firm represented Loews Corporation, I said, “I think you should appoint a trustee committee to deal with this.”

He said, “Well, how should I proceed?” and into the Law Center Foundation to protect the proceeds as it could out of the University law school was anxious to get as much of the day-to-day management one shouldn’t get involved in.

SIDNEY BOROWITZ: There had been an agreement that had been signed between the law school and the Hester administration with regard to the Mueller Company. That agreement would have made the benefit of the sale of the Mueller Spaghetti Company accrue entirely to the law school. Hester signed that agreement. I must say, against my advice. Sawhill doggedly broke it. He made the Law Center Foundation and the people running the law school miserable and subsequently got them to permit him to abrogate that agreement. If that had not succeeded, I think it would have ended up in terrible litigation between the law school and the University.

MARTY LIPTON: There then ensued several months of preparation to have a sale of the Mueller Spaghetti Company. A public offering of stock, and a negotiation basically between Larry Tisch and myself as to how the money would be split.

Of course, there was considerable disagreement. Larry Tisch wanted more than half of the money for the University. And we wanted more than half of the money for the law school. I negotiated with Tisch and ultimately—not without considerable hard negotiation and even the threat of litigation between the University and the law school—we came to an agreement.

ALLEN CLAXTON: I don’t think it was easy for Marty Lipton to do that. A lot of the law school people were very unhappy about their willingness to support the University. The professional schools back then had the better reputation than the undergraduate schools.

Lipton said, “We can’t be a great university if it’s only the professional schools. We have to support the strengthening of the base of the liberal arts. And we have to put our money”—the law school felt it was their money—“on the table.” It was a wonderful gesture and a critical element in setting the stage for the following 15, 20 years.

SIDNEY BOROWITZ: Dean Redlich played a very important role in the resolution of this problem. He was able to convince the law school faculty to accept this offer, even though there was no legal basis for the faculty agreement to the deal.

MARTY LIPTON: We had worked out an agreement between the law school and the University providing for a 60/40 distribution in favor of the law school if we could get $100 million, and 50/50 distribution for anything over $100 million.

Suddenly, there was a company, Foremost-McKesson, that wanted to buy the Mueller Company. We would not have to have a public sale of the stock. Ultimately, we reached an agreement to sell the Mueller Company for $125 million.

We ended up with $47.5 million going to the University and $67.5 million to the law school, creating an endowment for the school. Each received considerably more than a 50/50 split of the original $75 million would have produced.

NORMAN DORSEN: Here was this Mueller money that is certainly a half a billion today and probably more. Some people felt that the law school was shortsighted, that the University should have given us all the money or 80 percent, because it was Vanderbilt who had raised the money, and Russell Niles who nurtured it, and the next dean, McKay and Bellitch. Other members of the faculty felt something that I now feel very strongly, having spent some time in the University administration. It is very important to have a strong university to support a top-flight law school, or even a very good law school.

MARTY LIPTON: This sale happened in the second year of Norman Bellitch’s deanship, and it began to give the law school the capacity to move from being a top-20 school to making a serious flirtation with breaking into the top 10. What Norman did was to provide in OG’s music Hall and Mercer and the new library a basic infrastructure, which, by the time we got to the end of his deanship, established all the fundamental bases for making NU what some would say today is the greatest law school in the world. Certainly one of the two or three or four greatest.

SIDNEY BOROWITZ: Sawhill deserves the highest marks for the Mueller sale. It was the most significant thing that has ever happened financially to New York University.

I don’t think it would have happened under Hester. Sawhill sought and found such a generous offer for the company that there was enough in it for everyone.

MARTY LIPTON: A treaty was negotiated in connection with the Mueller sale to protect the law school from being taxed by the University beyond its allocated portion of University expenses—a great concept of the law schools—and to provide that the law school could designate four law school representatives on the University board to look out for the school. Or at least to give the law school the comfort of knowing that four people in whom it had confidence were trustees of the University.

As a result, the law school worked rather cooperatively with John Sawhill. And the four law school trustees—I was one of them—became fairly active as trustees of the University.

“THE LAW SCHOOL AND THE NOODLE FACTORY”

Jay Oliva called the day when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment since Jay Oliva called the day when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment since Jay Oliva called the day when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment since Jay Oliva called the day when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment since Jay Oliva called the day when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment since Jay Oliva called the day when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment when the sale was announced “perhaps the most historic moment when the sale was announced “Perhaps the most historic moment when the sale was announced. 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Once again, NYU was saved. But New York City was ailing, morale and safety plunging to a new low.

**BLACKOUT! HEART OF DARKNESS**

For a night and a day, nothing worked except telephones, transistor radios and a certain gritty New York resilience in the face of disaster. Subways ran dead. Elevators hung high in their shafts. Waterpumps failed, and with them sinks, tubs and toilets. Streetlights and stoplights went out... The air was thick, the office lofts stood nearly empty. Airports shut down. Hospitals switched to backup generators when they could—some went to candlelight.

More than 2,000 stores were pillaged, and guesstimates of property losses run as high as $1 billion—enough to qualify the stricken areas for Federal disaster aid... [By comparison, in the blackout of '65] there were only 96 arrests all night—and crime rates actually fell.

— JULY 25, 1977: PETER GOLDMAN, NEWSWEEK

**ABE BEAME:** We've seen our citizens subjected to violence, vandalism, theft, and discomfort. The blackout has threatened our safety and has seriously impacted our economy. We've been needlessly subjected to a night of terror in many communities that have been wantonly looted and burned. The costs when finally tallied will be enormous.

**RICH STANLEY:** Certainly nobody wanted to go to Brooklyn then. Greenwich Village was largely controlled by drug dealers. You could not walk through the park without being offered opportunities to buy all forms of drugs repeatedly. Most people refused to walk there after certain hours of the day.

The stretch of Broadway between Astor Place and 4th Street, which is now one of the more interesting, vibrant places to walk around, was a series of boarded-up buildings that was absolutely terrifying after dark.

But the city was trying to get itself out of its hole. A couple of administrations of mayors started to figure out how to police more heavily and control much of the street scene.

**BOB BERNE:** In 1976, New York was at the bottom of a lot of trends, financial and social. But NYU was a vibrant place, one that offered a lot of promise.

If I was studying the financial problems of cities and issues around school districts, what better place to study them than a major urban capital that was close to bankruptcy?

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But the city was trying to get itself out of its hole. A couple of administrations of mayors started to figure out how to police more heavily and control much of the street scene.
ALLEN CLAXTON: I'm a New Yorker, grew up in Washington Heights. After graduate school, my whole career had been public finance. I'd worked for Mayor Lindsay and was working for CUNY as budget director when I got a call from John Sawhill, wanting to interview me. It was 1976. NYU's reputation was not as strong as it is today, by a long shot. Some of it was deserved, some of it wasn't. We were an open-admissions kind of school for academically qualified people, a role many other universities of our caliber didn't have.

But the feeling was that NYU was about to turn around. When I took the job, we ran a small deficit. But by the second year we were in balance. We didn't have a lot of money to spend, but we weren't spending money we didn't have.

Sawhill was clearly concerned that we get away from the reputation of being a school where the state had to bail us out by agreeing to buy the Heights campus.

But he didn't want to stop there. He felt it had to be the premise for the rebirth of the University.

 Miracle on Washington Square

John Sawhill, the jogging, trash-collecting president of New York University, has performed American education’s most dramatic rescue operation.

Not long ago trash cans were disappearing with distressing regularity from Washington Square Park, and no one was more upset about it than John Sawhill, the 41-year-old president of New York University, whose penthouse overlooks the southwest corner of the park. He ordered his staff to buy 25 chains and locks and the following morning, after he went out for his daily jog around the square, he applied himself to the problem of the trash cans.

In July 1975, when Mr. Sawhill—the former Federal “energy czar”—took command of the country’s largest private university, he inherited a projected $9 million operating deficit, subpar academic faculty morale and a board of trustees not at all sure that there was a future for urban private education.

Since then he has engineered perhaps the most dramatic rescue operation in the history of American education. N.Y.U.—which pours an estimated $500 million a year into the city’s economy—now has a balanced budget, a substantial endowment, growing enrollment and high faculty morale, and John Sawhill is one of the few presidents of major universities who wake up in the morning with the luxury of thinking about academic policy rather than about how to raise enough money to get through the day.

—APRIL 30, 1978: EDWARD B. FISKE, THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE
LARRY SILVERSTEIN: Sawhill became a reasonable and beneficial successor to Hester because he brought to the task very superior administrative capabilities. And an ability to choose talented people. Very good at that.

One of the first things Sawhill did was to look at the fact that the University was hemorrhaging, which we could no longer afford to do. We had divested ourselves of the Heights campus, and now that we had the proceeds of the sale, the question was how best to use them to benefit the University.

LEONARD STERN: When I was a student in the ‘70s, NYU was a lousy school. It was known as the subway school, with very few dormitories. Most of the schools had very low admission standards. If there was campus life, I didn’t come across it. I was a bit of a recluse. I had to get out of school and start making a living in high drive. The country had just come out of World War II. We had the wind at our back. Getting a MBA was a no-brainer experience. The business school was down in the Wall Street area. Classes started 6:00 p.m. and went till 11:00 at night. There was no intellectual interaction. I worked all the time. If I did, I didn’t spend a minute in it. Everybody was serious and exhausted.

I said, “Fine. Where?” He said, “How about Sunday?” Because he knew I was tired. I asked, “Fine. What time?” He said, “How about 7:30 in the morning?” I came over to the house at 7:30. And he said, “I’m not on NYU’s board but I’m very friendly with the people down there. They’ve asked me to mandate a balanced budget. Would you like to be a vice president of NYU?” I said, “Yes.” And he asked, “What do you think I ought to spend my time on?” I said, “I’m not a Wall Street guy.” I was very interested in changing, seeing the man over there? He’s chairing a committee searching for a vice president for NYU. I’ll bring him over.”

So I got into a taxi and had an hour’s interview with John Sawhill. If there was a search committee, he never told me about it. If there was anyone else who was going to make that decision, he never told me about it. At the end of the conversation, he said to me, “Would you like to be a vice president of NYU?”

“I don’t make decisions that quickly. How do you go over things without any great emotional attachment to it? But one day, Gus Levy, who then was the senior partner at Goldman Sachs, called me up and he said he wanted to see me. He was one of the biggest personalities on Wall Street of his generation. He was revered. So I said, “Fine. Where?” He said, “How about the same time?”

He said, “That’s the way it’s going to be.” Sure enough, I got a call from the president, John Sawhill. It was in 1978. I developed an immediate bond with Larry Tisch. Larry Lipton came on not long after I joined— and I became acquainted. A few of us on the board started to really work together on a continuous basis, where if we called each other and said, “NYU business,” we would all leave the meeting we were in and take the call. It became an exciting challenge to see if we could use our practical skills with the educators and administrators at the University to make substantive changes.

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He said, “You’re going to be chairman of the finance committee.” I said, “I’m not a Wall Street guy.” I was selling pet supplies and canary birds in those days [Hartz Mountain Corporation, founded by his father]. And he said, “That’s the way it’s going to be.”

Sawhill asked the trustees if they would be a good board member. I want you to work with me. He said, “That’s your task.”

Sawhill became a reasonable and beneficial successor to Hester because he brought to the task very superior administrative capabilities. And an ability to choose talented people. Very good at that.

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LEONARD STERN: To benefit the University.
Larry Tisch.

“THERE ISN’T ANY CALL LARRY COULDN’T MAKE”

THE LEADERSHIP OF LARRY TISCH

Loranzo A. Tisch, chairman and chief executive officer of Loews Inc., has been elected chairman of New York University’s board of trustees. He succeeds John M. Schiff, honorary chairman of the N.Y.U. board for almost 40 years and a trustee for 45 years.

JUNE 28, 1978: THE NEW YORK TIMES

NARTY LIPON: Larry was determined to make N.Y.U. a first-class university. He was prepared to make significant financial contributions himself but already made some. He was prepared to ask his business friends and personal friends who were capable of making significant contributions to join the board. And he was prepared to devote a considerable amount of time to providing the leadership.

NAOMI LEVINE: Most people sit on boards because it’s an honor, but they don’t understand the fiduciary responsibilities. If you work for a nonprofit and you have a chairman of the board who doesn’t understand that he has to help raise money, get another job, because that organization will not survive.

Larry Tisch was the perfect man for that job. He knew everyone with wealth in New York, and he was very philanthropic. A lot of people knew him. More than that, they respected him. He was a man of his word.

LARRY TISCH: Basically, it’s a person to person. You have lunch with people, you have dinner with people, you have breakfast with people. You solicit their support. I’m not a fundraiser. I don’t enjoy fundraising at all. It goes with the territory, so you have to do it.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: Larry said, “Come on, help me, work with me.” He started bringing in people who clearly represented younger blood, people who were capable of making significant contributions to join the board. And he was prepared to devote a considerable amount of time to providing the leadership.

NARTY LIPON: At the construction site this morning and I don’t like the way we’re doing this or that or the other thing. “Or I think we could save some money if we did it a different way.”

LEONARD STEIN: For instance: How do you do two things at once, like improve quality and improve revenues? Remember, the University was then and still is today tuition driven, not endowment driven.

We asked for an inventory of classroom use by the hour. Because every time you said you wanted to do something, some of the educators said, “Oh, we don’t have the facilities for that.” We asked: “How many classrooms, when are they used, what percentage of the seats are taken?” These are questions a businesswoman would ask.

Larry was determined to make N.Y.U. a first-class university. When I first came in as president it was a distinguished university and had a very important role in New York City, but it wasn’t really a national and an international institution—high praise—as it is today.

JAY OLIVA: The board was so important because their world and their business and their families were tied to the city of New York. Then they got to make this town work if you get that kind of person on your board, all the ideas that you’re percolating as gamblers, they’re taking those same kind of gamblers in their business, with their family. And they’re ready to help do that.

They literally recreated their history. They were graduates of a school that didn’t have a great reputation, not well known except as the place everybody went. And they turned it into a place where people said, “Oh, my God. You went there?”

I don’t favor a return to the traditional liberal arts if by that you mean that every student ought to take Greek and Latin. I do think it’s important that students have a broad range of subjects when they’re in college. After all, this is one of the few times in their lives when they have a chance to study the English language, for example, when they have a chance to study history and economics and sociology and all of the other arts and science programs.

Our society is becoming more complex; our society is becoming more technologically oriented, so we need people who not only have a broad background in the liberal arts but also have had a chance to specialize so that they can face the problems that we face in America today—the problems of how to handle the technology and the rapid changes in technology that are characteristic of our society.

The leadership of Larry Tisch.

Why arts and science? From President Sawhill’s Message to the Faculties

Because our enrollment is healthy especially at the undergraduate level, and our financial situation has improved, we have an unprecedented oppor- tunity to take the steps necessary to enable us to emerge as an innovative and intellectually excit- ing university.

Lew Rudin is another example. We’re in the Bobst Library, which we damn near demolished when classrooms were overutilized, there was a shortage of audi- torium space but not a substantial shortage of classroom space.

Then we would sit down with the administrat- or and say, “Look at these numbers.” It was Camelot.

JAY OLIVA: Lew Rudin is another example. We’re in the Bobst Library, which we damn near didn’t open because we didn’t have the money for it. We’re building a library like that in the middle of selling the Heights and going broke. And we’re trying to get some money out of Lew.

Lew looks north and points out the window. In his good, blunt way, he says, “You see that building? There’s not a soul in it now. And I’m losing money. Every time that light in that build- ing is on, I’m going to give you $10 million.” He did.

In other words, when the city starts to hop and losing money. When every light in that build- ing? There’s not a soul in it now. And I’m

Larry Tisch.
SHERIL ANTONIO: We were known for the avant-garde, quirky, offbeat—somewhere between Hollywood and Europe—style of filmmaking.

GEORGE STONEY: The so-called gritty quality of the NYU film school comes from the Village itself. From the exciting things that are happening all around the students.

SHERIL ANTONIO: Haig Manoogian was the chair of the undergraduate film program until he passed away in 1980. He was a man of great depth and character. Like David Oppenheim, he had incredible style. Singular artistic vision. Martin Scorsese dedicated Raging Bull to him, homage at the end to his teacher. These were men who believed that people ran institutions. It was about what passion you had for the arts, what you truly believed in and were willing to invest your life in.

ANG LEE: I applied to five places. Nobody looked at my application or gave me any response except NYU, which required some creative work, not just academic records. I sent a small, silent super-8 movie I made back in Taiwan, and Tisch chose me. Before that, I was a theater person, undergrad in the University of Illinois theater department. Once I started making movies I knew I had found my medium. I learned to stay forever hungry, not be afraid to try and to fail. And I learned to appreciate how collaboration and sharing are as much a part of learning as individual talent or genius. I learned how much I didn’t know, and I learned to enjoy the pleasure of asking and trying and testing. Those three years were probably the happiest of my life.

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Unusual for the 1970s, John Sawhill made three significant appointments of deans, who were given a lot of latitude. Sawhill understood that it could be a dark, and I thought, Why not? I came down for my interview at 8 a.m. John and I got along from the beginning. It was a shot in the arm. I was 32. I didn't have a doctorate. I think my other two colleagues would agree with me that we felt like we were going to a boy's club without much real admission. Abe stopped on the sidewalk and said, “I guess I just got into the club.”

In 1977, Shirley Ehrenkrantz was appointed dean of the College of Social Work, and in 1979, Jill Claster was named dean of the College of Arts and Science (CAS).

Sawhill was an early riser. I wasn't. I knew from the beginning that they should not just send their really good students to Columbia, and if you couldn't send a kid into New York with the idea that he's going to sleep on a bench in the park.

The other thing we did was change our admissions policies. I worked very closely with the then-director of admissions to persuade universities in the country seeking to expand its enrollment. And fun.

The law school had Hayden Hall. But they are many of you, I am sure, who have a spare room that would be perfect for a student to live in. Whatever your needs, a live-in student could be a welcome addition to your household.

There wasn't anything that wasn't a risk. The notion of expanding the sense of where our students would come from and not fighting it out with Pace and St. John's and Columbia. They do that, you have to have reason. Because parents from Dubuque are not going to send a kid into New York with the idea that he's going to sleep on a bench in the park.

In 1979, Jill Claster was named dean of the College of Arts and Science (CAS). She turned that school around.

N.Y.U., Bucking National Trend, Expands Its Classes and Faculty

New York University, with the financial crisis that five years ago was threatening its existence now behind it, has become one of the few major universities in the country seeking to expand its arts and science program and to hire a substantial number of new young faculty members.

The university also has a serious housing shortage, and Dr. Cluster of the College of Arts and Science said the university was losing a “significant, if not large,” number of students because of this shortage. So we finally began to get housing, but until then it was kind of catch as catch can.

Dear Graduate:

As you may know, NYU is faced with a problem in providing adequate housing for students. Each year more and more students who choose to come to NYU are forced to reevaluate this choice when confronted with this shortage. Something needs to be done to help alleviate the present state of this problem.

We at Washington Square College would like to propose a project involving these graduates who are seeking housing in the five boroughs of New York City. There are many of you, I am sure, who have a spare room that would be perfect for a student to live in. Whatever your needs, a live-in student could be a welcome addition to your household.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jill N. Claster,
Dean

JILL CLASTER: Washington Square College, as well as the University, had so little in the way of student services it’s hard to believe. I inherited a very, very small staff, perfectly nice people with no training as advisers. There was no counseling service. The kind of services that one simply takes for granted now just didn’t exist then.

Developing student services began to make a real difference in how students felt about the school. Getting the Counseling Center was a big improvement—and a big fight, I might add. The thing we did was change our admissions policies. I worked very closely with the then-director of admissions to persuade universities in the country seeking to expand its enrollment. And fun.

I was going to have a liner parked off Pier 11 and put students on it. We were going to have the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn. We were going to use some buildings in Queens. We were in the process of making it possible for us to say, “We’re a national university.”

Thank you.
The first environmentalist.

If it weren’t for John Sawhill, the University would have died then and there.

But in retrospect I can tell you about making the kinds of cuts and changes he made, he really did set NYU back on a reasonable shape. Neither was the University.

But he was fair-minded and looking for people with really outstanding people, but the personality did not rub a lot of faculty the right way.

There were outstandingly good people, but the general level was what it is today—very close to it. Sawhill, when he became president, wanted to do something about it. And he ran into a lot of resistance.

Tom Bender: My feeling, when I arrived at NYU, is that the faculty recruitment policy was something like. "This one will be good enough."

That was not good enough for Sawhill. He wanted to find out who the best person is in your field. Then he would say, "Why aren’t we trying to recruit that person?"

It didn’t mean that we hired the best person the next day. But it started making people think a little bit differently about NYU.

Ellen Clason: We were in very bad shape when John came in. I would assume that the mandate he got from the board of trustees was to do what he did. There was a lot of overlap in functions, in administrative offices, a lot of waste that nobody had been paying very much attention to.

There’s no question that, as rough as he was about making the kinds of cuts and changes he made, he really did set NYU back on a reasonable economic path.

Sawhill was a tough man, and he did not have any personal charm to soften the blow. He didn’t try.

He was the most difficult man I have ever met, but very tough. More than once I went with him, so I learned a lot. If I wrote something that was 10 pages and there was a mistake in it. Sawhill didn’t blink. He just looked at him and said, "I appreciate your feedback. You’re right. We should consult about it. So tell me what you think."

Sawhill did not have any lot of resistance. They punted around for a minute, and no one said anything. So that was that—and we went ahead with it.

Sawhill was always my hero because he was willing to take the long now and stick to his guns.

LARRY SILVERSTEN: Suddenly, the University is beginning to function—and function quite well from a scholarly standpoint. To the point where in full fall 1979 Sawhill decided to go off [on leave from NYU] to Washington to take a sub-cabinet position as deputy secretary of energy, because we were in this energy crisis.

RICHARD BING: If you ever walked into his office, whether it was, winter, summer, fall, it was the coldest. He never turned the heat on. He was irresponsible decision. Above all, there should be a commitment between the deans and the president on something this important because we have to sign a Dyer letter.

Sawhill didn’t blink. He just looked at him and said, "I appreciate your feedback. You’re right. We should consult about it. So tell me what you think."

That was not good enough for Sawhill. He said, "Don’t worry, don’t worry."

We went into the meeting, where the head of the Deans’ Council told him how distressed that people and they thought Sawhill had not been appropriate, and that it was an inappropriate decision. Above all, there should be a consultation between the deans and the president on something this important because we have to sign a Dyer letter.

Sawhill did not have any personal charm to soften the blow. He didn’t try.

I have to say, I learned a lot from him. He’s been a Democratic member of the House of Representatives, its third-ranking leader. I’m supposed to remember that?

ANN MARCUS: In my opinion, he’s been the most difficult man I have ever met, but very tough. More than once I went with him, so I learned a lot. If I wrote something that was 10 pages and there was a mistake in it. Sawhill didn’t blink. He just looked at him and said, "I appreciate your feedback. You’re right. We should consult about it. So tell me what you think."

That was not good enough for Sawhill. He just looked at him and said, "I appreciate your feedback. You’re right. We should consult about it. So tell me what you think."

Those deans were pretty shocked. They punked around for a minute, and no one said anything. So that was that—and we went ahead with it.

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JILL CLASTER: One of the nice things Sawhill did was to establish the School in deep trouble.

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1981-1991

JOHN BRADEMAS

the Ambassador
THINKING LARGE

JOHN BRADEMAS: When I arrived, I perceived NYU as a regional, New York/New Jersey/Connecticut commuter institution. My goal was to transform it into a national and international residential and research university. I don’t want to say that a decision was made, “Eureka! We’re going to change this university.” But my view was, “We’re in New York City. This is the greatest city in the world. Let’s make this the greatest university possible.”

JOHN O’CONNOR: The institution was fairly quiet. The person who was running the president’s office turned off the Xerox machine and the lights at 5. By 5:15, there was no one around.
JOHN O’CONNOR: When my wife and I first moved here, we lived on the west side of the Square. It was a somewhat complicated neighborhood. My daughter learned her colors by the colors of the crack vials in Washington Square Park. Crack literally changed the entire face of the city. I know of no other drug, except maybe LSD in its heyday, that caused such a social change…. Street violence had grown. Child abuse had grown hugely. Spousal abuse. I had a special crack YLROHQFH¿OHWKDW,NHSWWRFRQYLQFHWKHJHQLXVHV in Washington who kept telling me it wasn’t a problem…. It got that thick—horror stories that you couldn’t believe.”

–ROBERT STUTMAN, DEA SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE OF THE NEW YORK OFFICE IN 1985

TONY MOVSHON: You could get anything you wanted in the park. It was a great center of urban commerce.

SHERIL ANTONIO: One of our students was stabbed in the park for refusing drugs from somebody. It wasn’t a pretty place.

JOHN O’CONNOR: At one point the police commissioner, Ben Ward, said, “The park is a problem because it’s the students buying drugs.” We said, “Okay, any student who’s caught buying drugs, go ahead and arrest them.” A few days later, the police did a big raid in the park. The first person arrested was a retired police officer.

JOHN BRADENSON: When I left my apartment on Washington Square West, I noticed a lot of drug dealers in the park. I called Mayor Koch, and I said, “Ed, I’ve got to sit down and talk with you.” He brought the parks commissioner and the inspector of the 6th Precinct. I said, “We have thousands of students here, thousands of faculty and staff, parents visiting, tourists from all over the world—and this situation is intolerable.” Mayor Koch came through. He gave us strong support from the police.

NAOMI LEVINE: Improving the park was not a public relations activity. Improving the park meant working with the police department. We had wonderful relations with the captains in this area.

Public relations has to be a reflection of something real, not phony. In order to give Greenwich Village or Washington Square Park a good PR face, you had to make it a better place.

But the city itself started to improve down here, and we were the beneficiaries of the change in Greenwich Village. It was the city that improved the park, and it was the city police department that cleaned up the drug issues.

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TONY MOVSHON: Director of the Center for Neural Science since 2004 and from 1993–98 and 1987–91; Professor of Psychology since 1975, of Neural Science since 1987, and of Physiology and Neuroscience since 1990

IT WASN’T PRETTY

THE PROBLEM OF THE PARK

1981
ATHLETICS AS RECRUITMENT

The University Athletic Association, a national Division III intercollegiate athletic association of major urban research universities, was based on academic similarities instead of athletic comparisons. When the UAA began in 1986, NYU was among its founding members.

JAY OLIVA: Were we going to join the Ivy League? Not likely. We already had an Ivy League university in town. So the next question was, Where are the institutions that think the way we do about student life, about the role of the city, and about the notion that the city can be the next classroom?

We had a conversation with the chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis and with the president of the University of Rochester. If we were going to play athletics, it would be so much more sensible to play with schools that thought the same way, recruited the same way, and treated athletics the same way—and also connected athletes with students they were going to keep as friends for a very, very long time.

BOB KIVETZ: Jay was thinking that athletics were also a key to building community. He was always very involved with the teams. Especially basketball. He would be at every single game.

NYU students had no athletic center before the Jerome S. Coles Sports Center opened in September 1981.

RUSS HAMBERGER: In 1981, with the opening of Coles, the era of being a big-time athlete had passed. We weren’t going to put in the money to give athletic scholarships. And we certainly weren’t going to—as we were trying to improve our academic standards—lower standards to admit a student because of athletic skills.

The conclusion was that we should go into the Division III non-athletic scholarship category of the NCAA.

Once we built Coles, we got a whole new cohort of students who were interested in applying. We tracked it. In the admissions application, you sent in a card that indicated if you had played sports in high school—and the number of those went from practically none to a couple of thousand.

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BOB KIVETZ: Vice President for Auxiliary Services and then Global Campus Services since 2003; Director and then Vice President for Housing and Residence Life from 1987–2003

We talked to University of Chicago, thinking “Boy, if we could get them, that would be something, because the Ivy League’s always trying to get them.” Emory University in Atlanta. Johns Hopkins. Brandeis, although they didn’t come in until the second year.

It was an attempt to create a student activity environment that had some class. You’ll be involved with institutions where you’ll be proud to see the flags that are flying around your gym.

I wanted in on that. I wanted to involve NYU in a level of acceptance in the educational structure of the United States that would be helpful in all aspects—the recruitment of faculty, the recruitment of students.

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UAA

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FUNDING INVITATIONS—AND TO RAISE FUNDS.

TO COME, TO ENCOURAGE OUTSTANDING FACULTY TO YOUR UNIVERSITY IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE ADVANCES BEING MADE BY FASHION, AS A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT YOU WANT TO WAYS OF PUBLICIZING WHAT YOU'RE UP TO. IN LIKE

JOHN BRADEMAS: When leaders come, they would bring their press corps with them. The New York press corps would show up. If TV cameras would show up. On the one hand, it's the person, but on the other, it's the visual, and everyone is seeing it's at NYU. A lot of this was pre-Internet, pre-24-hour cable news. There weren't as many things happening, so you could get more attention. After one or two world leaders come, then NYU becomes the place that when you're in New York, you go to NYU. It starts to build on itself.

STUDENTs WERE INVITED TO THESE EVENTS. THEY BECAME EXCITED, BECAUSE THEY WERE ABLE TO CALL THEIR PARENTs AND SAY, "I MET THE LEADER OF A COUNTRY." THEY BECAME EXCITED, BECAUSE THEY WERE ABLE TO CALL THEIR PARENTs AND SAY, "I MET THE LEADER OF A COUNTRY."

JOHN BRADEMAS: Now the question was: Is John Brademas going to spend all his time trying to figure out where we've been or is he going to look to the future and get out there with his tin cup and start raising some money? And so I'd try to get the institution organized in an appropriate way.

WE WERE COMING OUT OF A TOUGH TIME, WHEN THEY HAD TO KNOW WHO DID WHAT TO WHOM, WHO WAS TALKING TO WHOM, WHO HATED WHOM. I KNEW WHERE ALL THE BODIES WERE BURIED.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: Jay became the inside man, John Brademas, the outside man. Larry [Tisch] and John Brademas, the board. It all functioned exquisitely. Things really began to happen.

JOHN BRADEMAS: After having been the president of NYU and seeing things first-hand, which is what I did, I found that we were not raising enough money to support a great university in the heart of New York City. I was accustomed to raising funds. And I was accustomed to making speeches. I announced a target of $1 million a week for 100 weeks in private contributions.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: When I arrived at NYU in 1981, I found that Jay Oliva had been in charge of research in my office when I was the whip of the House of Representatives. She had done her PhD at Johns Hopkins on majority leadership in the US House of Representatives, so she knew a lot about Congress. We strengthened our lines to Albany and to the NYU board of trustees, who were strongly supportive. At the same time, clearly a product of my experience in government, I said, "We have to give more attention to generating support for New York University from state funds and from federal money." I worked closely with Lynn Brown, who had been in charge of research in my office when I was the whip of the House of Representatives. We were coming out of a tough time, when you had to know who did what to whom, who was talking to whom, who hated whom.

JOHN BRADEMAS: We strengthened our lines to Albany and to Washington, DC. When I went back to Capitol Hill a few months after having been the president of NYU and saw some of my former colleagues, they asked, "John, what's it like being a university president?" I said, "When I was here, I raised $1 million a week for 100 weeks in private contributions."
“WHY SHOULD IT ALWAYS BE A MORGAN OR ROCKEFELLER?”

Tisch School of the Arts

1982

BILLIE TISCH: The professional leadership of NYU was very good. The board was developing into a group of thoughtful people who were not afraid to raise funds and to wrestle with the financial problems. It was very much of a team effort.

JONATHAN TISCH: I remember my father Bob Tisch would come home and talk about a board meeting or about just getting together with some of the other leaders of New York—whether elected officials or private citizens—who were very concerned that NYU needed to become the university it is today, because of its ties to New York City.

BILLIE TISCH: Larry felt a special responsibility. He could see what could possibly happen at NYU, so in the beginning he gave some gifts to support pieces he felt had particular promise. He was also given responsibilities that normally would not have been his interest but were important for NYU.

Case in point was the School of the Arts, which now bears the name the Tisch School of the Arts. It was a brand-new program, and Larry had no experience in the arts. He loved music, but it was really peripheral to his major interests.

But he felt responsible, so he helped it grow.

LARRY TISCH: I had mixed emotions about having our name on the building. But I work on the theory that there should be some Jewish names on the university campuses of America. Why should it always be a Morgan or Rockefeller? Let people at the universities know that there’s Jewish money coming into the university world.

That happened tremendously over the last 40 years in America. I thought that in the long run it was the right thing to do.

DUNCAN RICE: When I was dean of Hamilton College, I was invited to the inauguration of John Brademas. Long before I knew much about NYU, I was able to register Brademas’s extraordinary vision, the flash of what he said about connections between public service and private universities, and the global reach. That was the beginning.

NYU was well thought of, to the extent that I know about it, but hardly concentrated on New York as a city. And very much, if I may say so, under the shadow of Columbia. Obviously, one won’t be looking at a minor institution, but it was nothing like what it is now.

At that time, Jay Oliva, under John, was trying to fill the dean of Arts and Science position at NYU. I don’t quite know how I came to their attention, but eventually I was asked to come down. I had not forgotten the Brademases speech—‘that the image of the University was one of dynamism and outward-looking. So I took it very seriously.’

To this day, I find it slightly strange that John and Jay decided they would have someone from a small place for what was quite an important job. I was very fortunate.

It was a wonderfully receptive community. I do remember during my first year the number of people I met whom I regarded highly. On the other hand, the number of people whom I would regard as internationally competitive research scholars was relatively low. Yet very, very few were not committed to the institution.

There was a genuine devotion to teaching in most of the departments in Arts and Science.

JAY OLIVA: In American higher education, the best universities founded themselves on the centrality of Arts and Science. What bothered me most about the history of the University was that we were very largely a professionally oriented institution.

If you wanted to know what the classy places here would be, you would have said, ‘business, because of Wall Street; medicine, in association with the Health Alley on First Avenue; and law, which was the classy school of the place in Arts and Science, you would’ve said there are only two places where we ever liked to take a bow—the Courant Institute and the Institute of Fine Arts. And they were the two places that liked to stay away from the University as much as possible.

KATHLEEN WEIL-GARRIS BRANDT: The Institute of Fine Arts never had any relation to Washington Square. It really was a kind of boating undertaking. It had the money to function at all because of private donations. And still today it has its own board of trustees.
FARHAD KAZEMI: The issue we were always discussing in Arts and Science was, “Why isn’t Arts and Science the center of this University as it is in every other place?”

TONY MOVSHON: When I came, NYU was a bunch of professional schools with a semi-vacuum in the middle where Arts and Science was supposed to be. But I can’t imagine that anybody actually wanted it to be that way.

You can’t become a lawyer without being a historian. You can’t become a programmer without being a mathematician. You’ve got to have all the fundamental disciplines before you can excel anywhere else.

DUNCAN RICE: NYU did have a strategy, but it was a very rudimentary one, in the sense that it was in the particular vision of intellectual life he had. He had a manner that enabled him to browbeating. And he had very good taste. He brought an elitist understanding of the life of learning and of the University.

One of the things he decided was crucial was making the strongest possible appointments, the best person anywhere. JESS BENHABIB: He was the huge beneficiary. With Courant as an underpinning and with a very strong medical school, John and Jay had the capacity to build on what they had and move increasingly into the kinds of science that proved their reputation—by bringing in NSF money and Huguette money and National Institutes of Health money.

The final plank in the strategy was that NYU was of the city and in the city, but it was also compulsively and conceptually global. Being an inner-city university could be a source of strength, but you can’t only be city-based, because if you’re only city-based you can’t compete in the real-world rankings.

Not all of the departments were ready. But when a department was ready, Rice would funnel lines, funds, to that department. He was wise enough to realize he couldn’t build all the departments at once. You take the ones that are ready and you let the other ones sit for a while. It didn’t make them happy. But he was trusted enough that everybody knew their turn would come.

DUNCAN RICE: I was lucky that because Brademas thought big and because Oliva was utterly supportive of him, I was allowed to do things without too much interference.

As at least from Brademas on, there was a decision that money should be spent in particular areas with potential, as opposed to areas with strength. That is where Arts and Science was the huge beneficiary.

That was a world that NYU was aspiring to. It was simply in Duncan’s blood. He really got into this notion of tying the University to the city, to integrate nonacademic intellectuals and intellectual professions with the University, in informal as well as formal ways.

FARHAD KAZEMI: Based on discussions with Jay, the department chairs, and his kitchen cabinet, Duncan chose six departments in Arts and Science for special attention—some from humanities, some from social sciences, some from sciences—and asked them to come up with special reports about how they could go to the next level. Two of them were economics and political science. In the humanities, we chose history and philosophy—analytic philosophy in particular. Another was psychology. And we created a Center for Neural Science. Mathematics was already a top department, with some autonomy. A lot of funding was put into the six, and all of them improved. Of course, economics and the social sciences improved dramatically, becoming among the top 10 departments in their fields.

JESS BENHABIB: It took 15, 20 years to build economics. First, there was a deliberate focus on attracting the best scholars we could from around the country. We were very entrepreneurial. Every decision, every dollar spent was for that purpose.

Then we used to look at mistakes that other places were making. Sometimes, Harvard and Yale would make mistakes. In fact, Columbia would make mistakes. They wouldn’t promote somebody on time or wouldn’t pay them enough. We were always ready and hungry for those people.

I was in a department, we couldn’t change the undergraduate student body. The University’s reputation counts there. But the graduate students represent a lag in the quality of the faculty in individual departments. We started rising in the rankings. People knew, “Oh, sound-i-i in here.”

Now it’s extremely competitive—very, very hard to get into. And our students are excellent, really stunning.
The reason this leads back to neuroscience is that if you assume that you’re not going to be able to create a biology operation of the sort that some of the California places have, you ask yourself: How can we get into biological sciences at the absolute top level without having to do the whole lot, and therefore use lots of money that we haven’t got? Neuroscience is one subset of biological sciences, arguably—and many people would disagree—the subset of biological sciences where some of the most exciting things of our generation are happening. We had strength in neuroscience because of Tony Movshon. Jay and John were letting me do what I thought was best. I gave Movshon most, if not all, of what he wanted. He then brought Bob Shapley from Rockefeller University.

All of a sudden, we had a major operation in neuroscience, specializing in systems neuroscience, where a lot of the work was the mathematical modeling of neurological processes.

When you have people in motion, they have a halo effect on everything that you’re doing. In completely different subjects, your leverage and attracting people of very high quality tend to be greater.

Tony Movshon: There really wasn’t anybody in the central administration who understood how planning for science worked. But the institution was always fluid, it was creative, it was innovative, and it was willing to be entrepreneurial. And what we were always able to do was to reserve the right to go forward if it had the cash in hand. We allowed it to happen, and once we’ve got some money, We’ll give it to you and you can do something with it. Next year, we’re a little short of what we need, but you can go hungry.

The point I made to them was you can’t actually build a scientific enterprise like that. It takes a long time, you have to sign off on the whole package. You can’t just say, ‘We’ll see how it looks next year.’

The rest of us helped him, but he was the key leader.
THE FIXER GOING TO SYLVIA

DUNCAN RICE: I was extraordinarily fortunate during my time at NYU that nobody paid too much attention to the bottom line.

I don’t mean that Jay and the people who worked under him, like Sylvia Baruch, didn’t know the price of a pound. Or that they were irresponsible with University money. But it was made fairly clear that if I had an intuitive sense that we should go after a particular scholar, or if I thought there was a program that would help the University in reputational terms, then I wasn’t going to be asked too many precise and interfering questions about whether that might be financially risky.

It’s true that there was probably less mystery over the budget by the time I left than there had been before. But the day-to-day, week-to-week, month-by-month budgets were not what defined the capacity to go out and, for instance, we wanted to recruit a Jerry Siegel [professor of history] from Princeton.

That’s the kind of thing where I would go to history from Princeton.

RICH STANLEY: Much of what I know about university administration I learned from Sylvia. She was a fire, a behind-the-scenes person. She had known Jay from his days at the Heights. When he was articulating a vision, she was the one to turn it into specifics to be implemented and then figure out whose arms had to get twisted in order to get it done.

Ostensibly, her role was to make sure that the budgetary side aligned with what was going on. But through that process, she was able to exert an awful lot of influence and help deans think through intelligent recruiting strategies—how to build clusters of strength in subdisciplines within a department.

The smart deans saw her as a confidant. A lot of deals were able to be hatched ideas off her; first trial balloons that she could then work through with Jay or with Allen Clanton or Dick Bing.

They were the group of people that called themselves the Gang of Four. It was Jay and Sylvia and Allen and Dick who met once a week to coordinate budget and planning issues. Sylvia was vice chancellor. Allen was chief financial officer, and Dick was the budget director.

And every day after a Gang of Four meeting, I would have a load of things to do.

ALLEN CLARKSON: One of the nice things about how we managed under Sawhill and Brademas is that the turf lines were not clear. It could be very wheeling—whether about building dorms or food or security. It was a collegial, open, broad-topic environment, unique to NYU, that my colleagues in other universities didn’t have.

SILVIA BARUCH: My role was important but limited. It was to agree with Duncan on which areas he was going to spend the money on and where he was going to hire.

We rebuilt philosophy. We rebuilt the biology department just about from scratch. We built neural science.

All of these were quite costly, so we would have to agree, not only in terms of building the faculty, but that faculty housing would be available, and lab space, and maybe graduate student aid, depending on what was necessary for those recruits.

I always interviewed department chairs. But I can’t think of any instance when Duncan brought me something and I thought it was not a good idea.

Sometimes there were other people. For example, when Phil Furmanski chaired the biology department, he wanted to bring in two plant biologists.

I said to Duncan, “We’re in the middle of New York City. Why is he bringing in plant biologists?” It shows the level of naiveté I had about other universities didn’t have.

DUNCAN RICE: Things were ruled from the center with a very, very light hand indeed. That meant, for instance, that one could go after scholars who might not immediately look as if they would be able to earn their keep.

Tony Judt is a classic case. Was it worth the money to bring in Judt to begin with? Was it...
worth the money to prevent him from going back to Oxford when Isaiah Berlin’s chair went vacant? That risk paid off. But, in my estimation, not the slightest doubt after Tony Judt and then to invest money in him—not just in the academy but outside the academy: public intellectual, an author of work that is read almost certainly not. But in reputational terms, the answer in strict bottom-line terms is to Oxford when Isaiah Berlin’s chair went vacant? The pull factor was the atypicality of NYU. I really liked NYU, which had a certain kind of insecurity to try to prove that it was as good as Columbia, a certain kind of entrepreneurial energy. It felt immensely liberating. Duncan Rice was absolutely credible when he said that he wanted to make NYU a seriously great university, particularly the arts and sciences, without compromising in the least traditional scholarly, academic values. That was a combination of intellectual seriousness and streetwise entrepreneurship that I thought very exciting, so I came. It was 1987. I was a successful full professor, but what was important to NYU was that it wanted and could bring someone from Oxford. The next year, Jerry Orgel, a very good friend of mine who was absolutely fascinating, left Princeton to come here. Anyone could get a 65-year-old who’s about to retire anyway to come to a university if you pay him enough money. You try and get a 38-year-old to leave Oxford or Princeton or Harvard, it had better be interesting.

I came here really because I was invited by Tom Levenson, Jay Oliva, and Tisch, John Brademas, Larry Silverstein, Larry Levine, and Marie Schwartz. They were great people who listened to them and did something about it. I really liked NYU, which had a certain kind of insecurity to try to prove that it was as good as Columbia, a certain kind of entrepreneurial energy. It felt immensely liberating. Duncan Rice was absolutely credible when he said that he wanted to make NYU a seriously great university, particularly the arts and sciences, without compromising in the least traditional scholarly, academic values. That was a combination of intellectual seriousness and streetwise entrepreneurship that I thought very exciting, so I came. It was 1987. I was a successful full professor, but what was important to NYU was that it wanted and could bring someone from Oxford. The next year, Jerry Orgel, a very good friend of mine who was absolutely fascinating, left Princeton to come here. Anyone could get a 65-year-old who’s about to retire anyway to come to a university if you pay him enough money. You try and get a 38-year-old to leave Oxford or Princeton or Harvard, it had better be interesting.

Naomi Levine: I’m very cautious as a fundraiser. I didn’t pick that number out of the blue. It worked out so that I didn’t have to raise more than 200 or 250 million a year to reach, in 10 or 15 years, the billion dollars. But putting in the package of a billion made it sound extraordinary and gave it a certain excitement. When you run campaigns, that’s what you’re looking for. Allen Claxton: One of the usual points of, I’ll call it, disagreement between the fundraising side and the finance side at any university is that numbers are not only cash but prospective. That is, not really cash in the hand. So we think, “Oh, we’ve got all this money.” Except we don’t. It’s coming, or someone’s going to die and we’ll be in their estate. That sometimes created a little bit of, “Let’s not oversell the expectations.” But we got along fine with the development side. Naomi and I would challenge each other because I thought we gave away naming things too cheaply, particularly if we weren’t getting cash right away. That was just a natural tension, shared with other universities, too, that people wanted to exaggerate the value of what they were getting and what we were giving away for it. And Naomi wanted to close the deal. She was good. And in the long run, it really helped. Because when people see people giving money, they don’t look at the details of how much is in a will. They like to give money to success. As we proved we were successful, that made Naomi’s job a lot easier.
DESPERATE
BUILDING RESIDENCE HALLS

In the early 1980s, the East Village still conjured up images of drugs and Bowery bums, leading to the injunction, “Don’t park east of Broadway.” No one would venture into Alphabet City at night. People who lived there did not want development, which they saw as the beginning of a gentrification wave that would eventually displace them. But housing was essential to the transformation of the University.

**RICH STANLEY:** When I arrived, in 1977, there were nowhere near enough dorms to house the number of students we had or wanted to attract. Students either lived at home or they lived all around the city and commuted to take their classes.

It’s hard to point to a strong, successful university that operates on that basis, where everybody disappears when they’re not in class, including the faculty.

**SALLY ARTHUR:** NYU was a sleeping dog in many regards. There was an intentional plan that if a school board bought it, there was a 20 percent construction bonus.

So I called to get what it cost. $20 million. Then I called Larry Silverstein, one of the main real estate people on the board. He thought it was a terrific idea. I called Larry Tisch. I described the two-parcels of land. None of us had done pencil-out numbers, what it would cost to build the dorm, how much dorm fees we could get, and Larry says, “Go ahead and buy it. We’ll submit it to the board after we have a contract.”

So I called back, negotiated the best price over the next day or two, and it was ours.

**ANN MARCUS:** They had to be in neighborhoods close enough to the Square for the students, but also where the residence hall would be a community in and of itself. So there was a big push for the Third Avenue buildings and also for the new low school residence hall.

SALLY ARTHUR: We had students in the Hotel Seville [at 22 East 29th Street], and we had one on 42nd Street. You had to supply transportation from the hotels to campus, back and forth.

We got rid of them as soon as we could. We bought the Carlyle, we leased Lafayette downtown, we leased Water Street downtown. We had a real estate office that was humming.

**RICH STANLEY:** I started at Weinstein and then moved to Robin. I think that’s where we met.

AB: That’s right. I was in Robin.

CC: I got to New York and I remember my father drove me up to Weinstein. He looked at the city and looked at the dorm and he said, “Let’s go home. I’ll drive you back now.” And I said, “No, no, no way.” I was literally in Oa. [He grew up in Ohio. Both parents were factory workers.]
Bob Kivetz: To become a residential institution 24 hours a day, seven days a week, you had to have all the services we take for granted today. So dining became very popular. Student health service had to be open longer hours. Increased hours meant more staff on duty throughout the evening and even the night.

You had to build a sense of community. A sense of identity with the institution. Back then, there was a very strong identity toward the schools: I was a Tisch student, I was a Stern student.

What we really became was a fully residential institution, with all the services and facilities we provided in the residence halls.

The first year I was here, we had a student lobby for students to select rooms. At that time, the students thought that Third Avenue North, which is on Third Avenue and 30th Street, was too far away from the Square. They protested. Fortunately, we were able to work it out. You laugh about it now, the idea that Third North is so far away. It’s just a few blocks.

Ann Marcus: The buildings have to be large enough to make the costs work. But it was important to work with the neighbors, so that you weren’t building large buildings that cast a shadow over the park or into the historic neighborhoods that you weren’t building large buildings that cast a shadow over the park or into the historic neighborhoods.

It was always easier to do that. And always more exciting.

With a renovated building, you had to work within the boxes of that structure. There are things that you couldn’t always do or couldn’t convert.

We were constantly looking for new property to meet the demand.

Rich Stanley: Every year it got harder. It was a lot easier in the ’70s and ’80s, when the University didn’t have a lot of money to do it. And a lot harder as Greenwich Village became probably the hottest area for real estate in the entire world.

When you walk around the Village, you don’t necessarily see any logic as to exactly where the University is located. That’s because there isn’t any logic.

A lot of the acquisitions were really serendipitous as to what was on the market—and what wasn’t on the market at a price that was reasonable to afford.

The one or two buildings that are on the east side of Broadway. I’m not sure we ever would have said we wanted the University there. But they were good buildings and they became available, so we took advantage of them.

Bob Kivetz: Each building had its own security. That’s something the crime rate in New York City was slowly decreasing.

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DUNGAN RICE: One other thing that I didn’t understand when I came—and that I have since come to see as an enormous virtue, is the Heights tradition, which I suppose Jay Oliva represented more than anyone. You took bright students, put them all together, tried to keep the unit small, and remained absolutely devoted to the notion that while universities are about beautiful ideas and intellectual excitement, they lose their purpose unless someone is getting that excitement across to the young people who are there. Jay’s enormous strength was that he took that tradition and made it incarnate down at the Square. In other circles, this would be called reverse takeover. But if you’re moving towards being a research university, the terrible danger is that you forget about the students in the process.

Because of the Heights, NYU didn’t.

ANN MARCUS: Over the years, I have the image of Kabin dorm change. Some years students talked about it as the gay dorm. Other years they talked about it as the black dorm. Other years it was the arts dorm. It was a microcosm of everything going on at NYU. In the beginning of the year when the smoking regulations went in, all those girls right out of high school would be sitting on the pavement outside the building smoking. They would do that for a week or two. If you see them wearing pastel colors, and by September 15 they’d all be wearing black.

SALLY ARTHUR: There was one full-time counselor when I arrived in 1984. When I went to ask him what were the issues, he went over to his mantel—he had a fireplace in his office—and he picked up these little cards and went through them. “Nothin’ much goin’ on, No one’s goin’ to counseling.” There were 12 students he had made notes on. But as this campus grew and people were coming from all over the United States, we couldn’t get on the phone if we wanted—and we didn’t—so we had to learn to be very creative. Serious issues of alcohol use, drug use. The commuters would come home at night, and Mom and Dad had to deal with it. But if it happened on campus, we were certainly responsible for it. By the late ’80s, there were five or six counselors. We handled a whole lot of things. We had cult workshops and taught students how to prevent getting sucked in by spiritual leaders who were teaching them down the path of being estranged from their families. It was a difficult time, and I think we did a pretty good job.

STUDENT COUNSELING

ANN MARCUS: I oversaw the registrar—but I’m not sure we got it as modern as we thought we would. Other universities and organizations had big computers, a mainframe. We had typewriters; machines were there. There was only one little girl in Florida who knew how to repair them. If they broke, we’d have to fly him in. He was a man in Florida who knew how to repair them. He had some big computer, a mainframe. We had to keep them up. If they broke, he wouldn’t come. The registrars were still ironing records because of the leaks in the building. We had done everything manually, big lines around the block. It was very paper driven. Paper was a lot of what we did.

ANN MARCUS: By the end of the ‘80s, into the early ‘90s, it was very exciting. The universities were not doing everything the same way any longer. We had a couple of years later is that what people wanted. We couldn’t find any students like that, and so we hired models. They were beautiful viewbooks. I look back on it with some irony because what we learned is that people want something more interesting, something more real, more the truth. We really wanted to be punks in the East Village. By the end of the ’80s, into the early ’90s, urban had become very hot.

ANN MARCUS: We found that parents weren’t as concerned about the arts as we thought they would be. The idea of urban life in this country has changed very rapidly in the ’80s and it wasn’t just New York. It was Boston, it was Washington, DC, it was Philadelphia, it was USC in Los Angeles. All urban, highly selective universities started doing a lot better. We just hit a cultural moment.

THE RENAISSANCE OF NEW YORK

“NOTHIN’ MUCH GOIN’ ON” RAZZLE DAZZLE ENERGIZING STUDENT RECRUITMENT

BOB KIVETZ: Dave was always going out looking for these students. He sent his recruiters everywhere. Then, usually around May of every year, they’d call me up and say, “We have a problem. We just accepted more students. You better go out and find housing for September.”

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: In conjunction with everything we were doing at the University, there was also a vast improvement in Greenwich Village. Suddenly, instead of a location that was decrepit and very, very negative, it became a place everybody wanted to be.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

BILLY TISCH: It all goes together. When the city does well, NYU does well. The fact that the city has been safe is very important. The ’80s and ’90s in New York were really tough times. At the city’s fortunes improved, NYU’s were improving alongside it.

THE END OF THE REnaissance

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GREG ALBAINS: We used to do these college fairs. And they used to place us next to those independent schools like New York Institute of blah-blah-blah, New York State Institute of blah-blah-blah. NYU was in the middle. In the early ’80s, I remember people used to come up to my table and ask me, “NYU had hair styling and cosmetology.”

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“IF YOU WEREN’T AT THE MEETING, THEN I’M TALKING ABOUT YOU”

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: People began to wonder, how is this University raising all this money? How did it get successful all of a sudden? Larry Tisch dedicated himself in a very significant way. He would have these development meetings. It didn’t take long to realize that this development group came to these meetings religiously. They were usually eight o’clock breakfasts at the Regency Hotel. Larry ran the meeting bang-bang-bang, and by nine you were finished, gone, out. Very precise. Everybody came. Good weather, bad weather, other obligations—you didn’t miss a meeting. People speculated: This group is functioning incredibly well. What’s the secret?

MARIE SCHWARTZ: I learned what was going on behind the scenes.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: I remember sitting with Larry and saying, “How’d you get to know all this stuff?” He said, “Well, when you deal in business, it’s important to know as much as you can about the person you’re across the table from. The more you know, the better your position is, and the more successful you can be in those negotiations.”

Number two, we were successful as hell, really successful in getting people, identifying them, going out and getting them. Number three, if you weren’t at the meeting, then I’m talking about you. Therefore, you better make sure you’re at the meeting.

Naomi Levine was always part of all of this, a very effective part. The strategizing of Naomi, the constant determination to seek the new and the untouched, not just the low-lying fruit but the fruit you had to reach for: Naomi was extraordinary in her ability. It became a mission, almost like a family. We were so intensely involved with each other and in the task of building this University and making it better.

BILLIE TISCH: Larry had a very good sense of people. As the University became more successful, people wanted to be on board. He recruited people who had special talents and who had much to contribute—yes, dollars, but, beyond that, wisdom and judgment.

A BOOM IN BENEFACTORS FOR N.Y.U.

Laurence A. Tisch, Leonard N. Stern and Lewis Rudin never had much desire to see their alma mater again after they graduated. They had never expected to come back to campus the way they have, as benefactors and members of the board of trustees.

Until 1980, N.Y.U. was a commuter college for New Yorkers whose parents wanted them to stay at home while they received a practical education. It was usually in business.

“I was 15 when I went to college,” said Mr. Tisch (class of ’42), the 63-year-old chairman of the Loews Corporation and acting chief executive of CBS Inc. “My parents thought I was too young to go away.”

For 59-year-old Mr. Rudin (class of ’49), president of the Rudin Management Company, one of New York’s biggest real estate operations, the story was much the same. “My brother was already in the Army, and I didn’t want to leave my parents all alone.”

Mr. Stern’s father had other reasons. “He thought we shouldn’t waste money on dormitory costs when we had perfectly good beds at home,” said the 48-year-old real estate investor and chairman of the Hartz Group, which includes the Hartz Mountain pet food business.

Now these local boys have made good.

—NOVEMBER 23, 1986: ALBERT SCARDINO, THE NEW YORK TIMES

NAOMI LEVINE: In those years, women had not yet assumed the role they do today in philanthropy. We had a few—Phyllis Wagner, Marie Schwartz. Today, if women are not included in your campaign, you’re not going to make it. But in the days when I was just beginning, women were not yet at the forefront. So we were dealing mostly with men.

TOM FRUSCIANO: You had a group of people who really contributed financially because they were part of that school of opportunity—people who came to N.Y.U. in the 40s, got an education at a school like the School of Commerce, and ultimately gave major donations to this institution because N.Y.U. gave them the opportunity to succeed. They became very, very wealthy here in the city and they felt they had to give back.

THE DEDICATION OF THE TRUSTEES

Trustees at work.
NORMAN DORSEN: When I came here to teach in 1961, the school was a third-rate law school. I always say, upper third-rate. In 1975, Redlich brought new energy as dean by pushing affirmative action, diversity within the faculty, and championing, more than anybody, legal clinics. One of the big events in Norman’s deanship was when Tony Amsterdam moved from Stanford to NYU in 1980. Redlich made him the head of the clinics. Most of the students were commuters, but a fair number of them lived at Hayden Hall, which was entirely a law school dorm. Others rented apartments in the area. Norman was very eager to build the Mercer Street dorm, as well as a new library configuration. By the end of the ’70s and the beginning of the ’80s, the school had certainly moved into the second rank.

JOHN SEXTON: I was very fortunate when I was graduating from law school. I was going down to Washington to work for judges for a couple of years. Harvard had expressed an interest in having me on its faculty, which got the major law schools in the United States interested. So suddenly this 37-year-old former college professor was in a seller’s market.

NORMAN DORSEN: John came to the law school in 1981. I was the first person to interview him when he was a law clerk in Washington, DC.
The Colloquium in Legal, Political, and Social Philosophy was founded by Ronald Dworkin and Thomas Nagel in 1987.

RONALD DWORIn: It started out as something very experimental and is now solidified. The centerpiece is a three-hour colloquium, with the presentation of a paper by either a member of our faculty or other faculty in New York, or, more usually, a philosopher from elsewhere in the country or the world. Students and other members have had the speaker’s paper a week in advance. Tom Nagel [professor of philosophy] and I alternate summarization of the paper. Then we have a very intense discussion.

The day before, I meet with the students alone for a two-hour discussion—one hour, a discussion of last week’s colloquium, and the other, a discussion of the colloquium to take place the next day. The students are introduced to state-of-the-art philosophy in the areas that are of most concern to a thoughtful lawyer.

It was experimental not only in the format, but also in the way in which it brought professional philosophers into the law school. That has proved to be contagious.

NORMAN DORSEN: I was not the standard or safe choice.

MARTY LIPTON: There’s no way any organization, let alone a law school, becomes nationally prominent and a very successful place without leadership. And we had great leadership.

JOHN O’CONNOR: The search that led to John Sexton becoming the dean of the law school after Norman Roselich was very precise. It was John Brademas saying, “After Norman Roselich’s leadership of the law school, the next dean is probably going to be the most important dean selection we’ll make. So we’ve got to do it right.”

The Colloquium in Legal, Political, and Social Philosophy.
“WE NEEDED EVERYTHING”

NORMAN DORDEN: John provided the ambition, the vision. He organized the alumni, brought people into the school who had never had anything to do with it. He asked Debra Lamorte to do research that had never been done and found people who were worth $50, $100 million who had never been asked for a dime.

Debra Lamorte: At one of our meetings, he said, “I called up this fellow and said, I’d like to talk to you about the law school.” And he said, “I’ve been waiting for this call for 20 years.”

NORMAN DORDEN: The first two faculty he hired were Marcel Kahan and Chris Eisgruber. These were stars.

Debra Lamorte: One of the first events I worked on, after I became assistant dean for development, was “100 Years of Women at NYU Law.” The first two faculty he hired were Marcel Kahan and Chris Eisgruber. These were stars.

Debra Lamorte: When John came on board, he went about figuring out, “Who are the best legal minds in the country? How can I get them to NYU? If I can get those minds to NYU Law School, the best students are going to follow.” That’s exactly the formula he used.

Tony Welters: I attended public schools here in New York City. Manhattanville College wasn’t eye-opening for me, but I was a man on a mission. I knew through it in two and a half years. By the time I was 19, I was in law school at NYU. I’d always had an interest in being a lawyer. More important, I was the first in my family to attend college, and obviously the first to attend law school. For me, both college and law school were a means to an end—an opportunity to help provide for my family. Neither of my parents ever graduated from high school. But they had an appreciation for education and an understanding that you don’t fool around, as they would describe it. You get the job done and move on.

I knew that NYU was the best law school I ever got into. They would probably reject me if I applied today. I couldn’t say while I was there that I knew how important it would become in my life. It was many, many years later, when I realized how much of my success was tied to my start there, that I really became invested.

One day I’m in my office. My assistant comes in and says, “The dean of your law school would like to meet you. He’ll be in Washington and wants to have a cup of coffee.” I had no engagement with the school. I graduated in ’77 and this call probably came along in ’93, ’94. And so I met John Sexton, then dean of the law school, and we have a cup of coffee. During the cup of coffee, he says, “Look, we have this annual giving program, and I would like you to sign up for that.”

I tell people every day, “That’s the most expensive cup of coffee I’ve ever had in life.”

John Sexton: It’s fair to say that I, and the group of faculty I represented, saw that the only way for the law school to become truly great was to begin to position itself as part of a research university. The more we could connect the economics department, or philosophy, or history, the better we as academic lawyers could be.
Creating A Model for Legal Education

The Global Law School Program

1993

Norman Dorsen: After we appointed very, very good people, John spoke to me one day about something he was calling a global law school. “What do you think of it?” he asked. I remember saying to him, “If I know what it was, I would tell you what I think.”

John Sexton: It was as a law school dean that I began to think seriously about the role of higher education in the emerging globalized civil society. We wanted to begin the complex process of revising legal education to meet the challenges of global law.

Norman Dorsen: The origins of the Global Law School Program (GLSP) go back to the summer and early fall of 1993, when John held conversations with several people, including Rita Hauser, an alumnus of the school and former US representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, about the possible impact on legal education of the remarkable changes in communications, transportation, and early fall of 1993, when John held conversations with several people, including Rita Hauser, an alumnus of the school and former US representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, about the possible impact on legal education of the remarkable changes in communications, transportation, and

John Sexton: It was not simply a matter of adding courses for students who intend to specialize in international law. We were creating an integrated global approach to legal education—a place where the finest faculty and graduate law students from around the world would come to join extraordinary American faculty and students to spend time together in the classroom, around the campus, and in New York City, the legal and economic center of the world.

Norman Dorsen: The program was conceived in 1993, planned and publicly announced in 1994, and implemented in the fall of 1995. John asked if I would assume direction of the program, and I decided to go for it.

JOHN SEXTON: In the classroom and in less formal settings around campus, faculty and students gain deeper understanding not only of international legal order, but they gain new perspectives on American law as well. And, just as important, they develop transnational ties that sustain them for their entire professional careers.

Vanessa Lesnie: I would never have imagined that a law school could be quite so diverse. I have been taught by or spoken to academics and judges from France, Italy, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, and, of course, the United States. I have taken courses dealing with subject matters ranging from legal philosophy to international contract law to human rights law to American constitutional law. My colleagues come from all corners of the globe.

Marty Lipton: Dean Sexton initiated a program to make the law school one of the most highly regarded in the nation. The law school embarked on a major fundraising campaign, expanded faculty recruitment, expanded facilities, and improved alumni relations and student financial aid.

The success of the law school was a major factor in launching the success of the University as a whole, then and today.
October 6, 1988
From press conference to announce the naming
of the Leonard S. Stern School of Business

John Brademas: It is with immense pride and a
 deep sense of gratitude that I tell you that Leon-
 ard N. Stern is giving to New York University the
 remarkable sum of $30 million to bring together
 NYU’s highly rated graduate and undergraduate
 business schools and rename them the Leonard N.
 Stern School of Business.

This truly extraordinary naming gift is the larg-
 est ever received in the 137-year history of New
 York University.

LEONARD STERN: I didn’t want to do it. They put a
 price on it—the board, with the gifts committee—
 of $20 million. And they couldn’t find anybody to
 come forward and name it for $20 million.

It was a different time. In real dollars, $20
 million was more money than the $100 and $200
 million that business schools are going for today.

As part of trying to raise money, I went and saw
 a couple of people. I remember going to Milton
 Petrie. The $20 million was a real turn-off.

One day, George Heyman, who was part of
 this group of really committed trustees, just a
 wonderful human being, came to see me at my
 apartment. He says, “Leonard, you should do it.”

LARRY TISCH: I brought George Heyman on the
 board. He had his MBA from NYU—and he was a
 tremendous help. All fundraising came under
 George. He had a great relationship with Naomi
 Levine, so they worked very closely together.

LEONARD STERN: I said, “Where’d you get this
 idea from?”

I was very young. I had been successful. But
 I was using my capital to build my business.
 I wasn’t so successful that $20 million wasn’t
 very important.

So he says, “No, this is once in a lifetime.”

I said I would think about it.

But he said, “I’ve got to tell you, if you do it,
 it has to cost you $25 million. Because every-
 body knows we put a $20 million price tag on,
 and you don’t want anybody criticizing you
 that because you’re so active on the board,
 you grabbed this opportunity for yourself. So I
 think you should do 25.”

I said to my wife, Allison, “I’m too young to
 do something like this. I’d be embarrassed.”

Right or wrong, I saw myself still as a very
 young man, by a generation. I was 36.

Allison says, “Can you afford it?”

I said, “Yeah, I can afford it.”

She says, “Then do it.”

“Why?”

“They need it.” And she says, “You’re in busi-
 ness. You’re a graduate. It’d be very appropriate.”

My wife talked me into doing it.

I had always planned a major gift to the
 University at a later time in my life—like a great
 exit, to cap a career. Then I realized that it
 would be more fun to see this building now.

I called George back and I said, “George, you
 got 25.”

And he says, “I’m thrilled. Can I come see you?”

I invited him to see me again and he says, “I
 thought you’d say yes. So I started to look.
 Nobody has ever given a naming gift of $30 mil-
 lion for a business school. That gift will affect
 what we can get other naming gifts for. I think
 you should make it $30 million.”

I just laughed and said, “Okay.” And I never
 looked back.

THE URBAN REALITY

In New York City’s near-bankrupt 1970s
and during the crack epidemic of the
1980s, the attractiveness of NYU was

tied to the fate of the city. By 1990, these
crises had somewhat abated, but the
number of homicides that year was over
2,000, an all-time high. In a big city, the
feeling of safety is often local. Greenwich
Village was less affected by violent crime
than most parts of the city. Even the East
Village was becoming increasingly safe.

Parents may have worried, but students
wanted to come to NYU. Mayor David
Dinkins started community policing,
which began to have an impact. Crime de-
clined rapidly. As always, NYU responded
to the city’s fortunes, emphasizing public
service within its schools and beyond.

THE LEONARD N. STERN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

1988

I JUST
LAUGHED
AND SAID

OKAY

I to r: Jay Oliva,
Allison Stern, John
Brademas, and
Leonard Stern.
BOB BERNE: A number of people who wanted to name the school for Mayor Wagner approached John Brademas. If you look at computer schools, many of them have proper names: the Maxwell School, the LJF School, the Kennedy School.

We thought the Wagner name celebrated the mayor. And because of three generations of public servants—the senator, the mayor, and Bobby Wagner, the city official—Wagner was a good name.

It allowed us to change from public administration to public service, which at that time was a little offbeat, kind of new, but since then has captured a lot of what the public sector is all about.

People felt it marked a turning point for the school.

ELLEN SCHALL: Howard Newman [then dean] renamed the school. It used to be the NYU Graduate School of Public Administration. In 1989, with the endorsement he and Bob raised and the permission of the Wagner family, he made two important choices. He named it for them and called it a school of public service.

‘A private university in the public service’ became a motto. The notion that we are part of a city became very, very important. Many of our programs reflect it: urban studies, the Wagner School.

People used to say, ‘We don’t want people to think of us as Columbia—which just happens to be in New York City. We are in New York City and part and parcel of New York City. And proud of it.’

ROBERT WAGNER: My hope is that the naming of this school will signal a renewed sense that government can make a difference and that the lot of poor people. The Village was the center of so much thought and action and political protest and energy. New York and downtown New York: It’s all I ever wanted.

BOB BERNE: We got more full-time, more national, and more international students. They really changed the complexion of the school.

We began to offer telecourses when the Berlin Wall came down, when the Russian Federation broke up. We were one of the first to participate with federal programs in providing public administration programs for Eastern Europeans.

ELLEN SCHALL: I was brought in to help rethink what Wagner could be. One of the things I did was look at the end event for Wagner students. If you think about med school, students do internships and residencies. At ed schools, they do student teaching. Law schools, they do clinics. At Wagner, they were doing these or even some that didn’t seem at all appropriate to a professional school, because when you get out into the world, no one really asks you for a 30-page paper. Nor do they give you exams. At Wagner, they were doing those or even some that didn’t seem at all appropriate to a professional school, because when you get out into the world, no one really asks you for a 30-page paper. Nor do they give you exams.

We created something we call the capstone—teams of students working under faculty supervision for an extern client or on a research assignment on a problem that is important but not urgent, because they take the year to do it. It’s exactly the kind of knowledge that launch- es students back into the world of work. It’s becoming a defining part of the Wagner School.

And virtually every student graduates having done a capstone.

When I started, all the projects were New York City projects. We now do dozens of proj- ects a year for external clients, and in 2010 a third of them were global. Student teams were in Kenya, in Jordan—all over the world.
“ESSENTIAL FOR A FULL LIFE”  
COMMUNITY SERVICE

JOHN BRADSHAW: In South Bend, Indiana, I was a supporter of United Way, and so I established an NYU analogue to make it possible for employees of the University to contribute to the NYU Community Fund, in addition to contributing to United Way.

Because we’re so large, we have a responsibility. Not only do we provide employment for thousands of people, but we are also responsive to the needs of organizations in the community.

RABIN LEVY: Every one of our schools was given the responsibility of developing programs with New York City institutions.

The School of Ed had all kinds of programs with the public schools. I developed a project with the dental school treating their teeth. I got money for our dental vans that went around to serving people suffering from facial pain. Nobody was responding.

I developed a project with the dental school with New York City institutions. The School of Ed had all kinds of programs with New York City institutions.

Not only do we provide employment for thousands of people, but we are also responsive to the needs of organizations in the community.

We've had deans, administrators, and other staff who see their lives as not just University-focused but the broader definition of community. We're where they shop, where they do their charitable work, where they spend their weekends and their evenings. That's a commitment that's much larger than work-related. It's place-related.

There was a time, not that many years ago, where we felt that the only thing students wanted to do was go make money or have fun. We're finding a change in that pattern. Students are reacquiring their interest in community that some of us felt had disappeared from the previous generation.

That's a commitment that's much larger than work-related. It's place-related.

ERIC SNYDER: I was there the first year of the C-Team, when Deb [James] asked a few of us if we were interested in working on it. Deb lived in the Village. She was part of the community, just like we were.

One of the wonderful aspects of being part of the Village is that you're not on a campus going to yet another fraternity party. We were part of a larger community and that was important. It was an opportunity for us as students to grow up in a way that makes us more in touch with the world.

To go off to college at 17 or 18 on some roll-up campus and study a textbook about society, or finance, or marketing is one thing. But to leave the classroom and go down to the subway and see a Russian musician playing the violin in the subway because now he lives here and he’s a concert musician but is struggling to get by—that provides a whole other education.

When Jay Oliva and Debra James set up the first C-Team, they were trying to help NYU students, faculty, and staff be more aware of community needs. It was very informal. If people were inclined in that direction, they would find something to do. With the development of the C-Team and the community-service focus, it became more of an expectation.

But how do you make that first step? The University has made it very easy.

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TOM BENDER: And that is a good standard. It was a very good team, and that’s why we gave Jay the job as president, because he had done yeoman service under Brademas.

JOHN BRADEMAS: If you’re a legislator, at least this lawyer, you feel excited at the prospect of developing a program that did not exist. Doing that, you learned how to articulate a goal, a purpose, a mission. And then you go out and generate support to make your objective reality.

That same attitude carried over into the presidency of New York University, where I thought, “Well, why don’t we do this? Why don’t we do that?”

You articulate your goal and then you say, “Now, to whom can I turn for help politically, both in a nonpartisan sense and in terms of generating resources, to make this vision real?”

TOM BISHOP: He was able to get the University to think on a completely different scale. John Brademas may have been Democratic whip, but he did not limit his Washington acquaintances to Democrats. If there’s one thing that John Brademas is not, it’s parochial.

SILVIA BARUCH: He was introducing the place to the world and the world to us.

LARRY TISCH: John brought a patina to the job. He raised the standard of the University from the outside, and Jay was raising the standard inside. It was a very good team, and that’s why we gave Jay the job as president, because he had done yeoman service under Brademas.

On December 11, 1990, the board of trustees chose Jay Oliva to succeed John Brademas.
1991–2002
L. JAY OLIVA
the Street-Smart Scholar
JAY OLIVA: For my inauguration, I invited all the rectors. We had 42—from Amsterdam and St. Petersburg and New Delhi and Tokyo. I was trying to say, “I don’t really want to be in the Ivy League. I want to be in the world league.”

It’s nice to think about an old football league that was founded in the last two centuries as a binding force. But much more interesting was the notion of the great cities of the world—that if you come here as a student, you get not just a shot at New York but a way to prepare yourself for the world that’s coming.

The global issue of the University always seemed to me to be founded on this theory: Most people in the United States already think of New York as the international city. Consequently, what would you expect of the students who decide of their own volition to go into that environment? That they have a global sense. We are the best gateway to a global experience. And if we are, shouldn’t we make that possible for students?

That’s when we sat down and said, “So where should they be able to go?”

We watched the global program become the megaphone of the idea that draws people to New York in the first place.

Our International Mission
by C. Duncan Rice, University Vice Chancellor

There was a time when it seemed a fairly simple matter for American universities to be international. That was because being international, to those of us who thought about such matters at NYU and elsewhere in higher education, did not mean any fundamental change in the core purposes of the institution. One of the most exciting signs of our times is that we have reached a point where that approach is no longer adequate, either for students or scholars.

The question, then, is what American universities, and what NYU in particular, should do about it.


AT THE SQUARE

JAY OLIVA: I didn’t invent the notion of international houses. But because we’re in the city, those houses—Maison Française, Deutsches Haus, Ireland House—become centers for the communities around them.

When they are working right, any visitor to New York who comes from the origins of those houses—France, Ireland, Italy, Germany—comes to that house to give a lecture or read a play. If you’re in the Maison Française, it’s a little touch of being in Paris.

It’s also the lead-in to the notion that maybe you want to extend the idea of New York to be in Paris, to go for a semester.

In so many ways, NYU has become an entrepôt between New York City and the international community.

—OUR VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY, L. JAY OLIVA, PRESIDENT, 1995

DUNCAN RICE: We moved on from thinking of the Madrid program and the Parisian program to having a Florentine program—although goodness knows it was an extraordinarily difficult thing to put it into shape so that it could be financially viable but at the same time educationally useful.

While you couldn’t be much more international than Brademas, it was Jay who was rooted in this idea that everything should be for the students. Therefore, if we were going to have houses in Prague, they shouldn’t be only for people like me or Dick Sennett to go around talking to the Czech intelligentsia. They should really be for on-the-ground NYU undergraduates who were going to get something special by coming here.

That turned into a kind of compulsive vision of globalismus, which in the end will make it impossible for a student to come to NYU without shaking out of any possibility of being an American isolationist. And that can only be to the advantage of everybody.
The history of La Pietra and the University spans decades and involved several NYU presidents, from the initiation under Jim Hester to cultivation by John Brademas to renovation and opening under Jay Oliva.

In 1962, before being appointed president, Larry Bacow had bequeathed La Pietra to New York University, so that the institution could become a University of the World. NYU's aspirations could become a University of the World.

La Pietra, 57 acres, four or five villas, quite a magnificent site even then. Arthur and Hortense bought it about six or seven years later. Together, they built an art collection and restored the main historic villa, which was originally a country house of the Sassetti family, bankers to the Medici. It was a 15th-century structure at the heart of the Villa and the Garden.

Arthur died in the '70s; Hortense in the '80s. So, we inherited the site and the art and the beauty of the garden and perpetuate the experience his parents had developed there. He was a famous Oxford graduate and wanted to give La Pietra to the university, but Oxford is not set up with a central administration to manage such a thing.

Bobby Lehman was the chairman of the board of visitors at the time. He wanted to give La Pietra to the university, but Oxford is not set up with a central administration to manage something like this.

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Bob Bernhard: How did you choose New York University? I admired immensely the University of Florence when they were both collecting art. Then became my job to visit Harold frequently just before I was appointed president [1962]. It then became my job to visit Harold frequently during the 14 years I was president to assure him that we intended to do well by La Pietra.

John Brademas was president. I knew that Sir Harold Acton was a great patron of the arts, so whenever it rained the water would come down the stairs like a waterfall all over the Renaissance tapestries.

Bob Bernhard: Four of us were working on it. Jim as leader. Debra James knew that the connection between NYU and La Pietra, where La Pietra was a five-year-old institution, was going to be essential to our success in Florence. She was able to draw on her savvy, her knowledge of how NYU connects with New York City, and her Italian heritage and forge a plan to connect NYU with the city of Florence. There were very important families that were the key—families measured in centuries, not in generations. They welcomed our students and opened their homes. The original skepticism held by the people of Florence shifted 180 degrees to what I would call a warm Italian embrace.

This was Debler at her best: translating and formulating the study abroad model that is still in use today. Andy Schaffer [NYU general counsel] was involved in the many legal issues that came about. And I was asked to take responsibility for the garden, the art collection, and the archives.

The art collection was easy because we had the Institute of Fine Arts. For the historic gardens, I linked up with Ken Wilkie, a British landscape architect who is still the landscape architect who is still the landscape architect of Florence. The art collection was easy because we had the Institute of Fine Arts. For the historic gardens, I linked up with Ken Wilkie, a British landscape architect who is still the landscape architect of Florence. The art collection was easy because we had the Institute of Fine Arts. For the historic gardens, I linked up with Ken Wilkie, a British landscape architect who is still the landscape architect of Florence.

Oxford, we became great friends. Yes, indeed. That is what I hope and pray. It enables me to feel that I can be happy.

JB: We, don’t you want us to do that for a very long time?

Yes, indeed. That is what I hope and pray. It enables me to feel that I can be happy.

Bob Bernhard: The Arts had created a magical place, a place that with forward thinking and NYU’s aspirations could become a University venue that was unequaled in the world. Roughly 50 rooms in the main structure were reconstructed as the Arts had from 1903 to 1994. Part of the whole, along with the Italian historic preservation restrictions, was that those historic spaces would remain pretty much the same. At the same time, the building had to be made sustainable. If you made the mistake of turning on a light switch, you would see sparks. There was one time, we were almost planning to paint and paint and paint and paint and paint and paint the walls.

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After leaving NYU Law School, I had a career in politics and public policy for 20 years. Through that work, I came to know NYU quite well. Around 2003, somebody who knew I loved Italy and had studied there as a study abroad student said that there was a position in Florence: Would I be interested in applying for it?

Which, in five seconds, I did. I traveled to Italy every summer and had been told once, by a friend from NYU, that I should go visit La Pietra. I didn’t. Now I was offered the chance to fly over and see it.

Having seen pictures, I said, “You don’t need to fly me there. I’ll take the job.”

I began working in September of 2004. When I arrived, the building and the restoration were done. It was beautiful and sparkling and ready for programming. That’s probably why I was chosen for the position: to help think strategically how to make this beautiful villa useful to the University.

The first challenge was how to get students into a building that they feel initially is a mausoleum containing old, dead art. The second was to figure out how to respond to a community of Italians who were slightly anxious about a large American institution arriving to own a very important property, fearful always that we were going to turn it into some kind of Renaissance Disney.

It was a lot of listening at the beginning—taking the ideas of people who had come before me, who had worked there for many years, understanding what they had dreamed about doing.

We run a brilliant cultural season during the summer, which is two weeks of actors and writers and performers living and working, and ultimately performing, in different rooms of the garden.

The season was actually the idea of the gardener, who said that the garden had been used in the time of the Actons as a stage for parties and performance. We decided that having restored the villa to its structural integrity, we needed to do restoration of its soul, to bring back the life it had before we arrived.

It’s always a challenge to get students to be involved in the community. There are thousands of Americans in Florence, and yet it’s easy to go through life and never speak Italian, or never really meet an Italian, except in the classroom.

We require all of our students to study Italian. And we have a large Italian faculty that’s thinking of different ways to teach them the language, not just in the classroom but by going out into the city, or bringing Italian students up for dinners with our students where only Italian is permitted to be spoken.

A lot of people feel that when students study abroad, they’re going to take only light courses—just enough to be earning credit but not so much as to interfere with their travel schedules. Students want to be away almost every weekend.

So we try to convey before they arrive that the courses are going to be as rigorous as anything they study in New York. But it’s not like we’re killjoys. We do want students to have fun. The world is smaller and faster in some ways. In others it remains very local and provincial, thank God. We all have a culture we hang onto, and we should hang onto traditions. But it’s important to have an awareness and an appreciation of other cultures.

And yes, education is the way to do it. You see kids who come with a natural belief that their way of doing things is the right way, from dressing to talking to behaving in the streets to the way they learn.

By the time they leave, they understand that their culture is an important culture. But it’s not the only one.

La Pietra is an opening, a receptivity to a different way of thinking and behaving. And whatever difficulty they have inculcating at the beginning, by the time they leave they are all beginning to angle for how they can come back.
ALICE HUANG: I was a professor of microbiology and molecular genetics at Harvard Medical School and also director of infectious diseases at Children’s Hospital, Boston. After almost 10 years, I was a little itchy to look around and see what else I could be doing.

At the same time, my husband [David Baltimore] was offered a job at Rockefeller University. I left Harvard because I realized that I probably would stay there as a professor for the rest of my life and not really have a chance to hold any major leadership positions. And I was really grateful that Duncan and John Sexton—John chaired the search committee—were willing to give me the chance.

I came to NYU just when Jay Oliva took over. John Brademas had left a wonderful legacy. He had gotten money through Congress to support the sciences here. Now they needed someone who was going to spend it wisely.

There were areas of strength. The Courant Institute was really a hotbed of intellectual activity. I knew I could build on that by doing cross-disciplinary programs for some of the sciences that were just beginning to need math in their research activities.

One example was in biology—in genomic science. The human genome was being analyzed, and I knew that if I could tie that to the people at the Courant, it would be quite a competitive program.

Also, I realized that I could take advantage of the Courant for the computer science part, because at the Tisch School Red Burns had wonderful ideas of how to use technology in the arts.

It was a time of fantastic opportunity. With the dowry that Brademas had left the University, we were able to take advantage of it.

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Also, I realized that I could take advantage of the Courant for the computer science part, because at the Tisch School Red Burns had wonderful ideas of how to use technology in the arts.

It was a time of fantastic opportunity. With the dowry that Brademas had left the Universi- ty, we were able to take advantage of it.
John Desantis: The #1 dean for science, Alice Huang, had a great sense of building. She could think very, very fast and had a good sense of planning. Our organic chemistry classroom was out of the thirty, literally. It was a disgrace. The others would take your breath away. After the tour she took with me, she went right up to the president’s office and said, “We have to renovate those spaces.” And get the money within the next two days. We had to shut the lab from May to bring it back up on September 1, which we promised. We worked seven days a week.

Syvia Baruch: We built across the sciences, especially but not only neuroscience. We also developed the biology department under Phil Furmanski, another chair who was very entrepreneurial, very smart.

Phil Furmanski, another chair who was very entrepreneurial, very smart.

Rich Stanley: It was always a struggle to figure out how to find the right kind of space and sufficient amounts of space to support strong sciences. It’s no coincidence that the Courant Institute was one of the strongest scientific operations at the University. They just didn’t have the same kind of space requirements that an engineering school or a biochemistry department has.

Over the years, we developed a strategy of doing small labs on the upper floors of existing buildings to take advantage of that upper floor space, which was closer to where you could stay two years or three years and then leave. That was never the case at NYU. All of us who worked together knew each other very well. We knew who had the soundest judgment, who had the management sense. And so we could be entrepreneurial.

Alice Huang: I was awfully lucky to be mentored by Duncan Rice and by Syvia Baruch. It takes someone special to do management in education because faculty are so independent. When we were trying to hire David McLaughlin, who was coming from Princeton, I remember taking him aside and saying, “You were made for this place. Your understanding of physics as well as applied math are what we need at the Courant.”

He said, “But all my life I’ve wanted to be at a Ivy League school.”

“You can always say you were a professor at Princeton,” I said. “But you could do so much more here.”

He was one of my best hires.

Also, at many institutions you have a changing management structure. People stay two years or three years and then leave. That was never the case at NYU. All of us who worked together knew each other very well. We knew who had the soundest judgment, who had the management sense. And so we could be entrepreneurial.

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He was one of my best hires.
When I returned to NYU in 1994, the financial crisis of the early- and mid- ’70s was over. The city and Greenwich Village were doing very well, and New York University was a place to which students wanted to come.

**RICH STANLEY:** By the mid-’70s, you couldn’t stop students from wanting to be here. Enrollment became wildly selective. So many students who were qualified to attend the institution were applying.

**ALICE HUANG:** NYU was smart enough to ride the wave of young people who wanted to be here, and parents who felt that at least the University provided a safe haven for their kids.

I remember that we were talking about a strategic way of getting better students. As we gradually inched up the SAT requirements, we realized that if we admitted the best we could get, we had a chance of getting a large number just because they wanted to be in New York City, wanted to be in the Village.

**DAVE MCLAUGHLIN:** As the director of the Courant Institute, there was no doubt that the quality of the students was improved in a very, very significant way.

**RICH STANLEY:** Every year the aspirations were not only for the number of students but for how much the SATs would change from the previous year. That had not been part of the discussion in the 1980s. In the ’80s, you didn’t have the depth of the applicant pool to which you could appeal because of Courant and partly because of NYU.

Now we started to attract students who did not need a lot of hand holding to take advantage of New York.

**MARY SCHWARTZ CAMPBELL:** In the Washington Square Arch, there is a door you can actually open. A staircase goes up to the top of the arch. When students come here, they’re coming to a place that has a history, a mythology and romance. Part of being here is to absorb that romance and to let it become a part of them.

**GEORGE STONE:** It’s very important that a university be right in the middle of life. When day broke, they issued a manifesto—that the Village should secede from Manhattan and become the Republic of the Heart and Mind. I always thought the Artist’s Brevet was a wonderful symbol of the Village and its relationship to the rest of the city and the world. When students come here, they’re coming to a place that has a history, a mythology and romance. Part of being here is to absorb that romance and to let it become a part of them.

**ALICE HUANG:** Another area that was very important in the development of science in FAS was the Center for Neural Science, headed up by Tony Movshon. When I first realized what they were doing, I would say to some of my friends, “Either Tony is ahead of the curve or he’s off the curve.”

It turned out that in systems neuroscience, he really was ahead of the curve and organized a department that took advantage of computer science, of old psychology and the social sciences, and of experiments that have been done in psychology but never with a quantitative approach. Then there was all the work being done to map the brain. The mapping required a lot of computational capabilities. And so I was able to utilize that devotion to build bridges to biology and chemistry.

**RICH STANLEY:** The Academic Computing Facility had an interesting evolution. Max Goldstein, the director, had been a scientist at Los Alamos who then was associated with the Atomic Energy Commission. The Courant managed to get one of the major new early computers here to support that research. And Max started figuring out ways to give other faculty members time on that computer.

**PETER LAX:** In 1980, Max was made director of the newly created Academic Computing Facility. By skillfully and forcefully managing that facility, Max brought computing to New York University and put NYU on the map in the world of computing.

**RICH STANLEY:** In a quiet way, Max almost single-handedly kept computing moving forward. He would figure out ways for faculty to do the kind of things they wanted to do in the social sciences as well as in the sciences.

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Then it started to become clear that one needed to have a very robust computing infrastructure to support research. Max eventually succeeded was replaced by a gay named George Sadowsky. I can remember George calling me into his office one day. He said, “Look what I’ve got on my screen. I can see the traffic pattern in a street in Seattle. And it’s being broadcast over this thing called the Internet.”

Nobody had really heard about that. Partly because of curiosity and partly because of people like George, who could see this thing coming. NYU was able to start to build a network structure. There were glitches along the way. During the Napier days, the network would crash occasionally when too many students were downloading music all night long. But it was an advantage to be doing so much renovation or building at the time because we were able to build into the dormitories these network infrastructures right from the start.

**ALICE HUANG:** The New York State Foundation for Science and Technology was looking to establish centers of advanced technology throughout the state, hoping to create jobs. I had been working with Jack Schwartz and Ken Perlin. Jack was one of the most highly respected computer scientists in robotics. He was like a guru to the younger computer scientists at the Courant. He was fearless. He would try anything. I think it was he who attracted Ken to come here.

Ken is one of the few computer scientists who won an Oscar for technology. He was a wonderful programmer. We were really interested in creating what nowadays would be called apps that would help professors who wanted to make teaching modules for students. We would talk to a psychologist, a social scientist, a computer scientist at the Courant. He was a wonderful programmer. We were really interested in creating what nowadays would be called apps that would help professors who wanted to make teaching modules for students. We would talk to a psychologist, a social scientist, a computer scientist at the Courant. He was a guru to the younger computer scientists at the Courant. He was fearless. He would try anything. I think it was he who attracted Ken to come here.

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MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL: The first dean, Dean Corrigan, had a mission—that the School of the Arts was going to be a “daring adventure.” By that he meant that we were going to go out and find the very best students and create an environment where they could take risks, experiment, push the edge a little bit, in close collaboration with the professional communities of artists in New York City. That was a new model for an arts school at the time.

SHERIL ANTONIO: Dean Campbell had been the city’s cultural affairs commissioner. The first thing she did was to reach out to all the people we have relationships with now—Spike Lee, Martin Scorsese, Oliver Stone, who are our graduates, from Ang Lee down to the person who just made a first film.

MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL: The Tisch model is that you learn by doing. If it is filmmaking or acting, you learn by practicing your craft over and over again—and you practice your craft with a faculty who are themselves working artists.

ALEC BALDWIN: When I arrived at NYU you could feel the difference. The only word that comes to mind is seriousness. There was a seriousness that was strikingly different from any other program I had ever seen—or have seen since. I genuinely believe that if I didn’t go to a school as good as this one, it would have negatively affected my ability to do what I’ve done. Because when you study acting, they’re giving you a lot of the tools and material that the commercial world is not going to supply you. When you have that training, it’s a profound advantage.

The support I received from Tisch made it possible for me to become an actor and to have a career in this business.

GREG ALBANIS: I always said, “Don’t discount popular culture in making New York and NYU look so good”—all those sitcoms that romanticize what it’s like to live in New York City.

When I see certain shows on Broadway or on TV, and there’s always a character who goes to NYU, I’m sure it’s one of the Tisch screenwriters who inserts all those kids, who romanticizes for students that urban is hot.

MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL: For me, our artists represent a way of knowing the world. What’s great about their training at Tisch is that they are trained as artists but they learn their craft in the context of a great research university. They have access to religion, to philosophy, to science. We need to create the kind of artists who can go out in the world and be the world’s conscience.

“URBAN IS HOT”

Tisch School of the Arts

ALEX BALDWIN BFA, Tisch, 1994; Honorary Doctorate, 2010

Journalist Charles Kuralt and Jay Oliva filming an admissions video in the Village—the first time NYU featured its own neighborhood as a selling point to prospective students.
Okay, this is what we did yesterday, what’s up on our laurels. We’re not about being here and unique about NYU. We’re not about sitting back and satisfaction with the status quo as something that we marry your interests to the needs of change or drive toward bigger, better, and faster. This is the culture we will continue to er—and the exercise of the imagination without restraint. There are so many things to do and to make synonymous with that of NYU.

Most entrepreneurs fail because they run out of money. That’s not why big businesses fail. Frequently, their ideas are bad. But small companies fail because they run out of money. So you don’t only need a good idea, you don’t only need to work hard. You have to have enough money to implement the idea.

At the core of entrepreneurial dissatisfaction with the status quo. An addiction to change or drive towards bigger, better, and faster—and the exercise of the imagination without restraint. This is the exercise of the imagination without restraint. This is the exercise of the imagination without restraint. There are so many things to do and to make synonymous with that of NYU.

There are so many things to do and to change. In fact, John Sexton speaks of dissatisfaction with the status quo as something unique about NYU. We’re not about sitting back on our laurels and thinking of contemporary topics that matter. Many of those we’ve had here as promising young people are now foreign ministers of their countries or heads of universities. We’ve been most successful in creating an international network.

We bring young people—students, young academics, young professional people in the world of the arts, NGOs, foundations, public service, business, sometimes in the military. We put them together with people from Romania, Canada, Mexico, Norway, and create off-the-record, intimate debates and conversations about contemporary topics that matter. Many of those we’ve had here as promising young people are now foreign ministers of their countries or heads of universities. We’ve been very successful in creating an international network.

Second, we have fellows, some in the sciences but mostly in the arts, from all over the world and all over the States who come here to take advantage of New York, the library, the people for it. We’ve been very successful in creating an international network.

The space is a metaphor. When you walk in, there was a staircase. There was a narrow rabbit-warren of hallways. There were windows that faced the Square with all its problems, languages, the science building. What’s the college?

What we now call the Silver Center for Arts and Science was then called Main Building. But it didn’t feel like it. It felt like a workhouse, which it was in the beginning. For the challenge for us was to make the Main Building—and that is to make the college seen as central. The space is a metaphor. When you walk in, there was a staircase. There was a narrow rabbit-warren of hallways. There were windows that faced the Square with all its problems, languages, the science building. What’s the college?

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BOB BERNE: NYU became a residential campus rapidly—you might even say too rapidly. The bricks and mortar, it turns out, are probably the easy part. The harder part is establishing student life around the campus that would appropriately supplement the more formal classroom education experiences.

New York City’s a complicated place. And we attract students who have very diverse and multiple interests. You could say to students, “Well, it’s New York. Just take advantage of the city.” But you really have to provide much more. It’s the programming, it’s the residential life, it’s advising students in the dorm, it’s the mental health services—the whole range of things that have been put into place in the last 25 years.

FARRAH PEPPER: It used to be that the only time people came together was at Commencement. It was an odd feeling—seeing all these people and not having had the opportunity to meet them in your years there.

But events like Grad Alley and Autumn Fest—big community events where everyone can come out, look around, and know that everyone there is a fellow NYU person—have done a lot to build a sense of community.

It’s important at any university, especially NYU, because it’s in Manhattan. Probably one of the best-selling points of NYU is that you have all of Manhattan at your disposal, but it also means people do things away from campus. And if there aren’t these events to give people a reason to congregate with their fellow students, sometimes we’d lose them to all the things going on in the larger city.

GREG ALBANIS: Jay was a son of NYU. He came from the Heights, taught at the Heights, was a faculty member. He was a down-to-earth president. He always said he wanted to make big look small.

LEONARD STERN: One day I was having a drink with Jay after work in his office. And he says, “We’ve got a real problem. We have the dorms over there, but there’s no flow. You know what I would like to do? Get one of those gussied-up buses that looks like an old-fashioned trolley and get it around.”

I said, “What’s the problem?” He says, “It’s expensive. We don’t have the money.” I said, “Well, what does it cost?” He told me, and I said, “Go ahead and do it.” It’s a hundred little things like that.

ALLEN CLARSON: We had a Washington Square Park cleanup every spring. I can remember scrubbing and painting the benches. We were all expected to be there.

This was community outreach before the renovation of the park. It was symbolic, but it was more than just a symbol. It reflected something that was important to us.

BOB KIVETZ: Jay was very hands-on. He knew a lot of students. He knew things that were going on, sometimes things we didn’t even know about. One of the smallest things Jay was involved in, which is really a big thing, is the purple flags outside the buildings.

HUNSTANLEY: You didn’t really know what was an NYU building and what wasn’t. Back in those days, there were still old hat and button factories, vestiges of the garment trade. The banners in front of the buildings and on the light poles pulled it all together, and in a way that was remarkably effective, considering how simple the idea was.

RUSS HAMBERGER: I remember being with a colleague from one of the schools in our athletic association—having dinner with him in the Village and walking around. He came from a campus school, and as we walked around and saw all the flags, he said, “You do have a campus here.”

BOB KIVETZ: That was Jay’s idea. It really brought a sense of community. You walk outside any building and you’re in the streets of New York. But you could always identify an NYU building by the purple flag.
**A SAFETY SCHOOL NO MORE**

Ten years ago, New York University was what colleges are to students from New York regarded as a safety school, fourth or fifth on their application lists. If you didn’t get into Cornell or Brandeis or Brown University, you could probably come to N.Y.U. But the administration, doing some long-range planning, decided that being the safety school was not good enough. So in 1994, it began a brain campaign aimed at moving the school into the nation’s top tier of universities. And according to academics around the country who have looked on with envy, the strategy worked.

In what was a remarkable fund drive at the time, the University set out to raise $1 billion. But unlike most institutions, which plow such sums into their endowments and then live off the interest, N.Y.U. spent nearly all of it to rebuild the University. It hired scholars from Princeton and Harvard and Stanford and Chicago. It opened a new performing arts center. It created a top neural science center. It opened a new engineering arts and sciences center. And it has increasingly become the first choice of students who apply.

Joe Comer, president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, which evaluates faculty at colleges nationwide for its prestigious fellowships, said, “N.Y.U. has recently become a great university, and if it continues to develop at this pace, it may well gain admittance early in the next century to that small, charmed circle of exceptionally distinguished institutions.”

And David Levi-Strauss, 14, a film major at N.Y.U. from East Northport, L.I., “Many of my friends went to colleges with lawns and trees, but for me this is where it’s happening.”

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**MINORITY OPPORTUNITY: FINANCIAL AID**

**BIU MARC**

Vice Provost for Student Services and Multicultural Affairs since 2007; Professor of German and Comparative Literature since 1995.

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**“AN INSTITUTION DRAMATICALLY ON THE MAKE”**

**BUILDING ON SERENDIPITY**

When I graduated in New Haven, someone said to me, “When are you coming back to Yale?” I said, “I don’t think I’ll ever come back.” And I loved Yale. I had incredible professo rals and incredible fellow students.

He said, “But you’re not really going to go to N.Y.U. for the rest of your life.” I said, “Totally, I think I am.”

There was an assumption in the mid-90s that people would go to N.Y.U. for a while, then go to a real university, a big research university—Yale or Princeton or Harvard.

You want to be New Yorkers, that there are wonderful things and hiring extraordinary faculty around the world. But they’re New Yorkers: It was an enormous mission to deliver the kinds of students who apply….

I was coming to an institution dramatically on the make. By your, six months by six months, we’ve seen extraordinary transformations. Some of them we could have predicted, because we had planned for them. Some we couldn’t have. We built on serendipity and then strategized serendipity, if that’s even conceivable.

It would be enormously unlikely that any great new university would emerge, one exception. And that was us. If you want to be where the world meets snow for the next generation, try us.

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**BUYING EXCELLENCE:**

**How N.Y.U. Rebuilt Itself—A special report**

**A Decade and $1 Billion Put N.Y.U. With the Elite**

**WILLIAM H. HIRON**

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RICH STANLEY: Tisch led because of the uniqueness of its programs. But all of the schools were starting to attract very, very good students. The Faculty of the Arts and Science programs were every bit as successful as Tisch.

The students who would be accepted at Harvard and Columbia and Stanford brought to the table expectations for higher levels of financial aid from N.Y.U. because they were being offered higher levels of financial aid in other places.

We started to make financial aid a very important element in delivering the kinds of students we wanted. And that put a lot of pressure on the budget. With the high costs of tuition and the residence hall rates, the requirements for many families to borrow were starting to become overwhelming.

ALLEN CLAFTON: We made sure that on a percentage basis we increased the financial aid budget more than we increased tuition. But there was always an issue of how much financial aid with what the school would be able to contribute.

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**INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES**

**BIU MARC**

Vice Provost for Student Services and Multicultural Affairs since 2007; Professor of German and Comparative Literature since 1995.
If you're in a comparatively weak position, you can throw the book out and start all over again. Or you can put a lot of resources into it, to work happily with Dick Foley in Arts and Science to bring in the best possible faculty. What did we do to innovate? Master's education depends on the relationship—the intellectual relationship, as well as, we hope, the spiritual and moral relationship—of professors to students. They come for a program, they come for a professor. So we had to work happily with Dick Foley in Arts and Science to bring in the best possible faculty.

We had a shared purpose. We were going to change the culture, helping departments to absorb them, respecting the differences and how the other disciplines work and being able to absorb them, respecting the differences and understanding why things are as they are in disciplinary domains that are far removed from science. It sounds corny, but you have to have it, even if you're a university where irony prevails. Context is a lot. But you have to have the people, particularly people like Dick Foley. I thought he was masterful at his job, unreasonably good.

Toward a Community of Inquiry
Graduate School of Arts and Science
1998

KATE STIMPSON: NYU had put its energy into its professional schools and its undergraduate college. There was law, pretty much a world unto itself; there was medicine, a world unto itself. There was business, increasingly a world unto itself. Then there were the smaller schools—social work, education—but they didn't have the clout of the big professional schools. The University also had some very distinguished departments, but it was not a very distinguished place. My predecessor, Annette Weiner, an excellent anthropologist, started the climb up. She was tough, much tougher than I was. Financial aid money had been in individual graduate programs. She pulled it all back. She started the MacCracken fellows, funding for doctoral students. Annette took this distinctive collection of departments and cracked heads. She had a sense of intellectual standards.

The job of dean was: One, to give a sense of pride that we didn't have to go shilling around, because there were some very, very good things here and a very, very good history. Two, to be normalizing, to be like other good graduate schools. We didn't yet have the strength to innovate. If you're in a comparatively weak position, you can throw the book out and start all over again or you can put a lot of resources into being as good as your competitors. I tried to do both, to normalize, to make our financial aid competitive with our peer institutions, to try to have graduate courses that were as good as our peer institutions, to set up new recruitment strategies to recruit better students. Just to say, "We can do this."

What did we do to innovate? Master's education was the most rapidly growing degree in the country. We really tried to build ours up. It was good for revenue, but it was also good for the school as a whole—recognizing where the intellectual energy should be. We started something called the Graduate Forum that was a national model for bringing students together on an interdisciplinary basis as an intellectual community.

If NYU was going to be an outstanding research university, the graduate school had to lead the way as a community of inquiry. And graduate education depends on the relationship—the intellectual relationship, as well as, we hope, the spiritual and moral relationship—of professors to students. They come for a program, they come for a professor. So we had to work happily with Dick Foley in Arts and Science to bring in the best possible faculty.

KATE STIMPSON: We set up the Master's College, the first in the country, which was to support and sustain master's students—whether ice skating parties or intellectual programs. It sounds corny, but you have to have it, even if you're a university where irony prevails.

We live in a social world, in a historical world. Context is a lot. But you have to have the people, both as individuals and working together. In FAS, we all understood each other. We all had—it put us frankly—little streaks of eccentricity, some of us more concealed and disguised than others. But it was fun because we had a shared purpose. We were going to be prominent.

PETER LENNIE: One of my closest colleagues from graduate school days is Tony Movshon. We were in the same field. I knew a great deal about what he'd set up here at the Center for Neural Science. So when he drew my attention to the possibility of coming here as dean of science, I was pretty interested. My role as dean was to help strengthen science at Washington Square. It was widely recognized that the resurgence of the University had been least strong in science. Confront, of course, had been enormously strong for a very long time and maintained its distinction. The Center for Neural Science had emerged from almost nowhere to be a powerhouse. There were some other departments that were strong. But looking across the board, people felt that the pace of progress in science had not kept pace with the progress in the other disciplines—and that some investments in science were really required to move things forward.

What was immensely enriching—and it always is for a dean—is being able to see how the other disciplines work and being able to absorb them, respecting the differences and understanding why things are as they are in disciplinary domains that are far removed from your own. I was able to play a small part in helping to change the culture, helping departments think ambitiously.
NOT ALL EXPERIMENTS SUCCEED

THE MEDICAL SCHOOL MERGER

BOB BERNE: Before 1997, we had in the health complex a medical school, a dental school, the Sackler Institute of Graduate Biomedical Sciences, and a hospital—all owned by the University.

MARTY LIPTON: When managed care became pervasive, it was clear that the hospital, which had previously been subsidizing the medical school, would be no longer able to do so. Indeed, the hospital might start losing money.

We worried that the financial problems of the hospital, which was not a separate entity but an integral part of the University, would have an adverse impact on the finances of the University and drive us back to the financial crises of the 1970s, which had threatened our survival.

For years we struggled: Should we incorporate the hospital and separate it from the University? Could we find a merger that would alleviate some of the problems of the hospital?

It became a central focus of Larry Tisch, myself, George Heyman, others on the board, and of Saul Farber, who was both the dean of the medical school and head of the hospital.

BOB BERNE: It was a time of big mergers, when people thought that you needed bigger and deeper medical centers to deal with anticipated changes in reimbursement and insurance. Our trustees thought that, as a medium-sized hospital, the Medical Center would be better off with a partner.

Initially, they looked to Mount Sinai to merge the medical schools and the hospital. But our faculty was dead set against merging the two schools. The trustees looked for other partners, but eventually they came back to Mount Sinai.

They decided they would not merge the medical schools—NYU Medical School would stay part of the University—but they’d spin off the hospital into an organization with Mount Sinai Hospital, a new entity large enough to assume some of the risk and hopefully run as an integrated institution.

MARTIN LIPTON: This merger was consummated in July 1998, with the understanding that the merged hospitals, of which John Rowe, CEO of Mount Sinai, would become CEO, would borrow $1 billion to refinance $500 million of Mount Sinai debt and to invest $400 million in a new NYU hospital.

BOB BERNE: The strength of academic medical centers is the partnership between the school and the hospital. By creating a hospital organization with two schools, you increase the complexity of trying to get the schools and hospital to work together.

Mount Sinai ran into some financial problems shortly after the merger. There wasn’t effective clinical integration. And in the corporate services, where people thought, “Now you’d have a great finance department, a great development office, great IT, great purchasing, great managed care contracting,” they all were subpar.

ANN MARCUS: It was a huge distraction for Jay and for Harvey Stedman, who was then provost—a front-burner crisis for three or four years. Having come out of the legacy of the fiscal crisis and then having the leaders bogged down in the Medical Center, we didn’t do as well as we might have.

MARTY LIPTON: The merger did not work. Major mergers, particularly of institutions that have a long history and their own culture, rarely work.

The Medical Center situation continued to be a major distraction and threat to the well-being of the University.

BOB BERNE: Yet we have also merged successfully. NYU Hospitals Center, which includes Tisch Hospital, merged with the Hospital for Joint Diseases and is now part of the NYU Medical Center. We did it gradually, supported at the top by the trustees and by the faculty and staff. We had a long period of affiliation before the legal merger. It was a win-win.

So mergers don’t have to be dysfunctional. But NYU became a little gun shy.
I went from being a person who said, “Well, it might be nice to be here” to “I really would like to have the opportunity to be appointed.” That feeling was heightened when I left the interviews and started to walk across Washington Square Park. There were the old Italian guys playing bocce ball in one segment of the park, somebody whizzed past me in dreadlocks on a skateboard in another part of the park, and there was a juggler by the fountain. I said, “This is a crazy cacophony.”

The profession had come off of what was a relatively rare downturn, in which it had gotten too big too fast. Of course the school was not like that even when I arrived. My predecessor had substantially that a faculty member threw a student’s work out the window onto First Avenue. I did—and I had to think about this before I did anything else. I decided to do it—was to apologize to previous alumni. It’s not often that a dean sends a letter of apology. And you were apologizing for what happened before I was there.

The numbers are compelling—from 43rd to third in research. From 40 percent first-time candidates for licensure in the United States. But many of the alumni were alienated. They thought the school had gotten too big too fast. Coming from the corporate world, I saw size as a huge advantage. It was a matter of harvest—student ratios and quality of the equipment in the clinics.

The good news is that the faculty immediately got behind it and the students quickly learned that we were a generous, kind place—but not a permissive one.

You never use the word “eliminate.” I would say we dramatically reduced the problem.

Great people made it happen. I feel very good about that.
I had a wonderful lunch with Jay, and he never asked me for any money. So I said, “Jay, why did you ask me to have lunch with you?” He said, “Because I like you, and I wanted to get to know you better.”

I said, “That’s nice, but you didn’t want anything?”

He said, “No.”

So I said, “Well, Jay, if you did want something, what would it be?”

He said it was his aim to have a proper center for student life. We had a small one that was in bad shape.

He said, “No.”

I said, “That’s nice, but you didn’t want to get to know you better.”

He would come with additional bathrooms.

We had 300 people in the auditorium. As the dean of the college spoke, tiles were falling from the ceiling and hitting the ground like wet diapers. We had to put out pot plants to catch the water.

Thank God when Kimmel came.

RICH STANLEY: We looked at a number of other locations. But it really only made sense to have a student center pretty close to the center of campus.

LOEB was a complicated job because it had knocked down Bobst and everything else. So we didn’t even consider it. We had a student center to be. He wanted it to have dining options for students. He wanted student club space, he wanted entertainment space.

He wanted at least three times as many things as could fit into the building.

BOB BERNE: The pivot point between John Brademas and Jay is the Kimmel Center, which, along with Bobst, established a focal point for the campus that to this day is a critical part of student life.

JAY OLIVA: Kimmel was for me and still is the sign of the great change. When they first opened it, they thought nobody was going to use it. Now you can’t get into the elevator.

So the Kimmel Center probably has more bathrooms than any other building of its size in the city—or the country.

It turned out so well. Somebody said to me, “Just wait until the students get a hold of this. In a year’s time, it’s going to be a mess.” But that didn’t happen. The students have been wonderful.

In September 2003, the Skirball Center for the Performing Arts opened in the Kimmel Center, serving NYU and the downtown community. Theater was a particular passion of Jay Oliva, who believed that “like travel, theater gives young adults the tools to understand the world in a very direct and almost always new way.”

LEONARD STERN: Let me tell you about my feelings for Larry Tisch. He’s the only person I’ve ever gone to for business advice. And I went to him not infrequently. I thought he was an incredible leader. He had this ability to take something complex, air it. And boil it down.

LENNY KIMMEL: Since 1984 Larry Tisch has been a student at NYU and CEO of NYU University. He never liked to spend money. When we were on one of our trips in Italy, he asked, “Why go to this expensive restaurant? We’ll get tomatoes, we’ll get cheese, we’ll have a pizza.”

So we had this picnic near a railroad track on a bumpy road somewhere in a dusty place in Italy, which indicates his approach to elegant dining.

But that was Larry. He never had a car and drove his car to come at night to drive him home to Westchester.

BILLIE TISCH: Larry had the sad poetic research, which I’m sure the audience would know that no further thanks were necessary. He was a relatable, intergenerational hero.

He was leaving NYU a better place. The prog- ress was palpable. Everybody in the city knew it. The academic community, not only here but throughout the country, knew it as well.

It was a team effort, and there were many people involved in making that happen. Larry had the happy circumstance of being the lay leader for a long time. But he had a wonderful board, people he could depend on. And he had wonderful presidents who served during his tenure—and there were a lot of them.
ALLEN CLALTON: Larry Tisch was very, very active in terms of our finances, but in the broadest sense. Not micromanaging this and that. But in the bottom line, in our strategy for investments, in the endowment. Much as you’d prepare, at trustee meetings, like clockwork, he would come with an excellent question, something you’d never thought about. Larry had a reputation for strong views. He was outspoken about the kinds of things he felt were important. But one of his strengths was that he would say his strong views—and then he would listen.

MARTY LIPTON: Whatever Larry wanted, people wanted to help him.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: Larry was chairman for 20 years. There came a time in the late ’90s when he decided it was time to retire. And the board chose Marty Lipton as its new chair.

LARRY TISCH: I thought 20 years was enough. And I thought Marty would be a good successor.

MARTY LIPTON: Larry was fond of saying, “I didn’t feel I had served too long or I was getting too old. I was just getting worried that Marty was getting too old to succeed me.”

LARRY TISCH: The University has made tremendous progress. Fortunately for me, I was there during this golden age of growth.

BOB BERNE: We’ve benefited enormously from having the right leaders at the right time. We were almost bankrupt in 1973, and we hired John Sawhill, who was a manager. He came from McKinsey and began to implement certain management reforms at the University. He was followed by John Brademas. John was an ambassador, a successful, multiterm congressman with a doctorate from Oxford. He felt that if NYU was going to be a president, NYU must be pretty good—because he was pretty good. So he began to project the University as a place that was much better than it was. And by sheer dint of stature in the world and by having Jay as the number two person and building the academics, he began to grow NYU out of its financial problems while also projecting it into a more global university.

LARRY TISCH: He built the builder. He built a lot of dorms. He built a lot of academic space. He picked good deans and gave them a lot of freedom to operate. Jay shaped it from the center in ways that set the tone of NYU as continuing Brademas’s tradition as a national institution, but providing spaces for students to live and become a university. Jay really began a lot of the study abroad initiatives that John has success fully built on.

I knew the place better than anyone else. He could almost uncannily predict, in a political sense, if we did X then Y would happen. He felt that if NYU was going to hire him as president, NYU must be pretty good. He was followed by John Brademas. He was an ambassador, a successful, multiterm congressman with a doctorate from Oxford. He felt that if NYU was going to hire him as president, NYU must be pretty good—because he was pretty good. So he began to project the University as a place that was much better than it was. And by sheer dint of stature in the world and by having Jay as the number two person and building the academics, he began to grow NYU out of its financial problems while also projecting it into a more global university.

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On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, four passenger airliners were hijacked by the militant Islamist terrorist group al-Qaeda to be flown into buildings in suicide attacks. Two planes, American Airlines Flight 11 and United Airlines Flight 175, crashed into the North and South towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. Within two hours, both towers collapsed.

A third plane, American Airlines Flight 77, crashed into the Pentagon. The fourth, United Airlines Flight 93, was aimed at Washington, DC, but crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after its passengers collectively took on the hijackers.

Almost 3,000 people were killed, including 343 firefighters—the deadliest incident for firefighters in the history of the United States.

New York University was about a mile and a half from Ground Zero, with over 2,000 students living in dorms in Lower Manhattan, some within sight of the Twin Towers.
WHERE WERE YOU?

LYNNE BROWN: I was on the 12th floor of Bobst, close to Jay Glazer’s office. It was primary day in New York, and I tend to vote early. So I get into the office before the first plane hit. People were going up and down to get on the roof of Bobst. You couldn’t see too much except the hole in the building. But you still recorded it as a small-plane accident. There was no way to get a sense of the scale from up on the roof.

BOB BERNSTEIN: Every two or three weeks, Harvey and Andy Schaffer, and I met in Andy’s office at 8:30. We were talking about installing passenger counters on our transportation vehicles—to count how many passengers we carry. I heard a faint noise, but nothing really unprecedentedly awful was happening.

JOHN BECKMAN: We went as soon as the second plane hit, we went down and joined Lynne and others in trying to figure out exactly what needed to be done.

JULIUS MARTIN: I never really had a chance to focus on what was going on because we just slipped into crisis management mode.

LYNNE BROWN: Like all of us, I can remember this as it were yesterday. Somebody knocked at the door and said, “A plane has crashed into the World Trade Center.”

JOHN BECKMAN: I remember, although not personally, those images of that little plane that ran into the Empire State Building a long time ago. So instantaneously I imagined those big buildings with a little tail sticking out of one of it. I thought, “This is really unprecedented.”

JOHN BECKMAN: Years ago, I used to work as a firefighter and an ambulance mode. I thought of myself. “There are going to be a lot of injuries. They’re going to need blood.”

JOHN BECKMAN: The office was almost like a bunker. It was in a row, with a window that was covered with his belongings. And so we heard nothing of the noise. We carried on business as usual.

JOHN BECKMAN: I ran into Sally Arthur on the street. I never really had a chance to associate with fall. I was thinking how clear it was. And, Harvey, and I stayed on the roof, talking about what could have happened. Then we see the second plane. It did kind of a loop. People were designated to become runners. “Go to kind of rush west.”

JULIUS MARTIN: I was on the telephone with a vendor in England. We were talking about a systemic attack. We carried on business as usual.

JOHN BECKMAN: We had to carry our plan forward. We started hearing the news reports and knew that something really bad had happened. After I ran to the roof of Bobst Library and looked to the south, I realized, without question, that something really bad had happened. We started hearing the news reports and knew we had to carry our forward.

JOHN BECKMAN: I will used to mean something different to me. It’s actually my birthday, and I was in a good mood. It was a really beautiful day in New York, cool and crisp, the kind of day I associated with fall. I ran into Sally Arthur on the street.

SALLY ARTHUR: I was standing with John Beckman in the Campus Esquire. That American Airlines plane went over our heads, and we both said, “This is too low.” My phone rang about five minutes later—1:18 P.M.—and asked me what happened.

JOHN BECKMAN: We’d always had a plan to mobilize a command center at Weinstein. Meanwhile, Jules and I and Sally Arthur, who was my counterpart in Student Affairs, met in Jules’s office.

JULIUS MARTIN: Before coming to NYU in 1997, Jules Martin served nearly 30 years in the New York City Police Department.

JULIUS MARTIN: One of the things that happened to us, that’s just the nature of the business. People were going up and down to get on the roof before the first plane hit.

LYNNE BROWN: It was a magnificent day. I had jogged that morning and remarked to myself how clear it was. Andy, Harvey, and I stayed on the roof, talking about what could have happened. Then we see the second plane. It did kind of a loop. People were designated to become runners. “Go to kind of rush west.”

BOB BERNSTEIN: Two or three weeks, Harvey and Andy Schaffer, and I met in Andy’s office at 8:30. The office was almost like a bunker. It was in a row, with a window that was covered with his belongings. And so we heard nothing of the first plane, which apparently went within a couple of thousand feet over Washington Square.

JOHN BECKMAN: It was a pretty big hole. But you think: Somebody from Teterboro lost track of where they were.

JOHN BECKMAN: Oh my God. I thought to myself, “There are going to be a lot of injuries. They’re going to need blood.”

JOHN BECKMAN: I think we were going to get a sense of the scale from up on the roof.

JOHN BECKMAN: “A plane has crashed into the World Trade Center.”

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LYNNE BROWN: There was that horrific scene. With that image, the office before the first plane hit.

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EMERGENCY

JULES MARTIN: We had chosen several locations in case of an emergency. One was the president’s conference room on the 12th floor of Bobst, the other was the Weinstein Learning Center, and the third was further north, in case something happened in the center of campus on the third floor of Palladium Hall. In the event that there is an emergency, those rooms all have fax, phones, so we can keep in business. The Learning Center at Weinstein was uniquely positioned, at the corner of University Place and Washington Square North. We had tested it for the millennium [Y2K—the mistaken fear of massive computer failure at the start of this new year when 2000 would be mistaken for 1900]. We knew it worked. We had designated rooms for IT, Student Affairs, Public Affairs, and Public Safety so that we could coordinate our efforts. All significant players of the University already had fax, phones, so we could communicate. It was Lynne and I, Jules Martin, John Beckman, Bob Kivetz, and Rich Stanley. That was the core group, with Harvey Stedman. We were figuring out exactly where the immediate vulnerabilities were.

BOB BERNE: We had rehearsed, but we had gone through a drill that allowed us to set up communications in that room.

BOB BERNE: If there was no water supply, a whole range of things. I won’t say we had rehearsed, but we had gone through a drill that allowed us to set up communications in that room.

LYNNE BROWN: If computers didn’t work—

JOHN BECKMAN: Some of us were having a debate about whether or not we should order an evacuation of the residence halls downtown. We were standing in Jay’s outer office, where the assistants sit, and we were going back and forth. Andy Schaffer cut it off and pulled us into the office. He said, “People are very anxious today. There’s a lot of fear. They don’t know what’s going on. We cannot afford to be seen arguing among ourselves. We have to make our decisions and then come out with them and seem very certain.” It was a good lesson in leadership. I’ve always remembered that.

BOB KIVETZ: We had over 2,000 students in the general area [of Lower Manhattan]. We had dorms at 200 Water Street, 25 Broad Street, 15 Cliff Street. We had Lafayette. We didn’t really know what was going on, so we gave the order to evacuate all the buildings. It was after 9. Some students had already gone to class. But we sent residence hall staff around to tell people to evacuate and to come up to the Square. We set up a student shelter at Coles gym. We had wrestling mats put on the floor. We were just preparing to make sure we could handle the influx.

LYNNE BROWN: The park became a gathering spot. You got a straight view downtown from Washington Square Park. When the buildings collapsed, I can remember hearing something I had never heard, hundreds of people in a collective gasp.

BOB BERNE: It was Lynne and I, Jules Martin, John Beckman, Bob Kivetz, and Rich Stanley. That was the core group, with Harvey Stedman.

BOB BERNE: There was a brief time between the two planes hitting—maybe an hour, hour and a half—until the buildings themselves collapsed.

BOB BERNE: After the buildings collapsed, the smell and the smoke started to drift up. There was a brief time between the two planes hitting—maybe an hour, hour and a half—until the buildings themselves collapsed.

LYNNE BROWN: The communication set-up in Weinstein turned out to be crucial, because we lost phones, and even cell phones.

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REACHING OUT TO PARENTS

LYNNE BROWN: The first thing was the triage of, Was anybody hurt? Was anybody missing? An indispensable member of the NYU team during those days was John Beckman. Working closely with Jules, John was monitoring developments, taking in information in real time from all the sources he could; and then crafting messages to share with our own community and parents.

JOHN BECKMAN: We knew we had to let parents know what was going on. As quickly as we could, we did an assessment just trying to find out whether or not we knew of any NYU faculty, or staff, or students who had been harmed. As near as we could tell, the answer was none, which was important news to get out. So that day was the start of info-alert, which has been the University’s way of conveying information in emergencies ever since.

LYNNE BROWN: A significant number, a majority, of NYU students come from outside New York City. Imagine these thousands of parents whose sons and daughters attended NYU, watching the Twin Towers come down and hearing some more or less vague sense—this is happening near NYU, where my child may not only be seeing it but be endangered by it. John and the team made outreach to parents a our number one communications priority.

LYNNE BROWN: I do remember saying, “Call your parents. It’s better if it comes from you. It’s going to be hard for us to get the word out.” Our reasoning was that nothing would better reassure parents than actually hearing their child’s voice.

JOHN BECKMAN: Newspapers started calling in and radios, because they knew we had dormitories downtown. We were the major university closest to the epicenter of all this.

I think that night we had Karen Arensen of the New York Times here. We took her on a tour of Coles after we got the students settled, showing her that we had everything squared away, that our students appeared to be in good shape. That was important, because we knew people would be looking at the Times. Parents and families would see that the students were well taken care of.

It was a very long day.

LYNNE BROWN: John Beckman was orchestrating all of this, making sure everything worked. His words helped guide, calm, and set a general tone we would maintain throughout those days. The city and NYU had just experienced a horrific act. But if we come together as a community and take care of one another, we will get through it. Here is what NYU is doing. Here is what you can do. Here is where you can find out more.

He worked around the clock, never flagging, helping each other. My memory is a constant, unrelenting focus on the students, their well-being, where are they, can we provide for them in any physical, or mental, or spiritual way?

But the students themselves came together, helping each other. My memory is a constant, unrelenting focus on the students, their well-being, where are they, can we provide for them in any physical, or mental, or spiritual way?

Both John Sexton and Jay Oliva were out and about a lot, so that our leadership was seen and present. They left the operational aspects to this SWAT team of us. In a sense, we were lucky we had two presidents at that point so we could deploy them both.

Bob Berne’s: The subways were shut down.

BOB KIVETZ: We told students to get up any way they could. Mostly walk, led by either RA’s who were around or residence hall staff. We had a manager or two in every single building or a RA who didn’t live here didn’t go home. By the second day, it was possible to get on a train and get out. But there was just too much stuff to do that you couldn’t really in any good conscience leave.

BOB KIVETZ: I think I got home Saturday.

BOB KIVETZ: We weren’t allowing anybody to go back there. No matter what they might’ve left. So we tried to set up arrangements to make their lives as normal as possible. We had no idea how long this was going to be.
BOB BERNE: The Medical Center was ready for large numbers of injured people, who never really came. A significant number of our Medical Center folks went over to the West Side to some of the piers that were used as respites for people to get first aid. But there was a low level of injury relative to the calamity that occurred.

LYNNE BROWN: I remember when there was the crushing insight that we didn’t really have to go into triage up at the Medical Center. Nurse practitioner Judith Haber, at the time an associate dean at NYU’s College of Nursing, was in New York City on 9/11. Haber recalls that the University sent every available health care provider—including students and faculty—to NYU Medical Center to treat the victims of the World Trade Center attacks.

JUDITH HABER: We were showering them, giving them clean clothes, washing their eyes, helping them connect with their families. But by 2 p.m., they stopped coming. There was not even a trickle. They just stopped.

THE TEAM

HARVEY STEDMAN: One of the treasures of NYU is that this crowd is can-do people. All of a sudden, a network of coordination begins to emerge, an improvisation. We’re great improvisational people at NYU.

LYNNE BROWN: As a team, we were checking our decisions all the time against each other.

BOB BERNE: At the beginning we met hourly. It was almost a continuous meeting. Then it went to every two hours.

BOB KIVETZ: Harvey and Lynne and Bob: Those were the three critical people who were instrumental in making decisions, in consultation with Jay and John Sexton.

TO: The University Community
FROM: Harvey J. Stedman, Provost and Vice Chancellor
RE: News Alert
DATE: September 11, 2001, 5:25 PM

The New York University community grieves for the dreadful terrorist attack on our city; our hearts and thoughts are with those who have been victims of this terrorism. No University facility has been damaged by the attack on the World Trade Center, and we do not believe at this point that any NYU students, faculty or staff have been injured. Effective immediately, all classes are cancelled for today, Tuesday, September 11, 2001....
BOB BERNE: Coles became a safe haven in the neighborhood for police, for first responders. All sorts of people used it as a way to shower, or to clean up, or to get some water. It really was tremendously important.

We figured we needed to house a lot of people. And we encouraged people to—

LYNNE BROWN: —bunk up together. It was an invitation to students to say, ‘If you’ve got friends, and you know they’re coming up from these places downtown, there’s not going to be an issue of guest policy: Bring them in.’

BOB BERNE: People really stepped up. Everyone in the University community: If they could provide help, they provided it. And if they needed help, they tended to know where to go. It was people really, really suspending anything parochial and personal and just trying to do the right thing.

It was an unusual moment. The pronoun “I” was stripped from the vocabulary, and it was quite we.

JULES MARTIN: The true heroes of the University—that day and the following day—were the students. I do not say that in a patronizing way. They managed themselves so well that they did not create another overarching issue for us. They knew the gravity of what happened. Sure, people cried. They could not get in contact with their families, on the telephone. They wanted to their families to students who didn’t have people.

We were the size of a small town to them. They wanted to their families to students who didn’t have people.

Sometimes it wasn’t the best idea—someone washed a cashmere sweater in hot water and dried it afterwards. We got some complaints. But we were able to get students back in about three or four weeks after the cleaning.

RICH STANLEY: Finding the resources to pay for that. Or making sure that nobody worried about finding the resources to pay for it.

It was all Jules, because of his knowledge and the relationships he had built up within the city. He knew all the right people through our regular food partnerships with the police department that we were able to keep the dining halls open for those first couple of nights.

JULES MARTIN: The Police had set up these “frozen zones”—a series of them as you got closer to Ground Zero. We managed, through our partnership with them, to get resources across frozen zones, across bridges, to bring food in every day. We were able to receive all basic necessities because we had developed this relationship with the first responders and the uniformed presence.

RICH STANLEY: To me it was a demonstration that NYU had figured out how to deal with New York—and had a team of people who were really devoted to the institution and to each other.

BOB BERNE: The next major thing we started to think about was food. Here we were actually expanding the University community, because commuters couldn’t go home and people were coming from other dorms, wanting a place where they had friends and other people to go through this with. And, of course, the city shut down all the bridges, all the tunnels. Transportation was very, very difficult. We realized that in about 24 hours, we weren’t going to have any food left.

LYNNE BROWN: We were the size of a small town at this point. You’re talking tens of thousands of people.

BOB BERNE: A lot of meals.

LYNNE BROWN: So we started thinking to inventory en masse what did we have.

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Sometimes it wasn’t the best idea—someone washed a cashmere sweater in hot water and dried it afterwards. We got some complaints. But we were able to get students back in about three or four weeks after the cleaning.

RICH STANLEY: Finding the resources to pay for that. Or making sure that nobody worried about finding the resources to pay for it.

It was all Jules, because of his knowledge and the relationships he had built up within the city. He knew all the right people through our regular food partnerships with the police department that we were able to keep the dining halls open for those first couple of nights.

JULES MARTIN: The Police had set up these “frozen zones”—a series of them as you got closer to Ground Zero. We managed, through our partnership with them, to get resources across frozen zones, across bridges, to bring food in every day. We were able to receive all basic necessities because we had developed this relationship with the first responders and the uniformed presence.

RICH STANLEY: To me it was a demonstration that NYU had figured out how to deal with New York—and had a team of people who were really devoted to the institution and to each other.

BOB BERNE: The next major thing we started to think about was food. Here we were actually expanding the University community, because commuters couldn’t go home and people were coming from other dorms, wanting a place where they had friends and other people to go through this with. And, of course, the city shut down all the bridges, all the tunnels. Transportation was very, very difficult. We realized that in about 24 hours, we weren’t going to have any food left.

LYNNE BROWN: We were the size of a small town at this point. You’re talking tens of thousands of people.

BOB BERNE: A lot of meals.

LYNNE BROWN: So we started thinking to inventory en masse what did we have.
JOHN SEXTON: There was pushback from the city, because they were afraid to be going out too many mixed messages: “This is open, this is closed.” But I think we did prevail on them by Friday. We took some internal criticism for doing it. But at least we’re nominally open. We get people back into some sort of rhythm so that Monday we really could open.

What good was it letting people just sit around, watching news reports endlessly from Thursday on? By Friday we were saying we were open.

September 13, 2001

Dear Parent:

...We know how anxious many of you must be to have your children so far from home in these circumstances. You can be proud of the way your NYU students and faculty have responded to this tragedy. They have been in contact with the City public schools; faculty and students from our School of Social Work have volunteered as counselors to work with the families of the missing; and Gallatin School students have started a fundraising campaign for the Red Cross.

Sincerely,

L. Jay Oliva

President-Elect

John Sexton
As our government develops increasing evidence that the origins of the terrorists, of the plot, and of the supporting organization lay in the Middle East, we have come to hear of disharvesting and discouraging reports from around the country of harassment and violence directed against those of (or believed to be of) Middle Eastern descent or who are Muslims.

Forgive me if I state the obvious: to impute the crimes of these horrific terrorists to those who may share their religion or their ethnic or regional origin is the height of ignorance, myopia, and prejudice. Each of us should take it as a personal obligation to fight such inappropriate and egregious sentiments wherever we see them emerge.

The University will not tolerate acts of hate. Any act of hate will be met with swift action of our disciplinary system, as well as referral to the law enforcement arm.

The University stands by its members of Muslim faith and of Middle Eastern descent; we count on all members of the University community to do likewise.

LYNNE BROWN: I don’t know if we had them as robust an understanding of our Muslim community. We didn’t have an imam or a head of the Muslim community. But I don’t remember any particular concerns or issues.

BOB BERNE: Just a general wariness about reactions at all different levels. But it didn’t occur.

And New York helps, because it’s so heavily immigrant that people are more tolerant and robust an understanding of our Muslim community. But I don’t remember any particular concerns or issues.

Since my father was asking me, I did what he told me to do.

My father is a religious guy. He’s got a big white beard. He himself covers his head. My parents were always encouraging and pushing me to do some of these things, and now at a time when people had questions about Islam and wanted to know what the religion actually stood for, they were telling me that they would feel a little more comfortable if I kind of blended in and didn’t let people know that I’m a Muslim.

Since my father was asking me, I did what he told me to do.

LYNNE BROWN: This is what Student Affairs does day in, day out. Whether it was convening focus groups, or student leaders, this is what Sally and her team do so well in terms of listening, being very sensitive. Hall conversations and KAI convening groups.

Notwithstanding the sincerity of the leadership, the situation for some Muslims at the University was complex.

KHALID LATIF: My two roommates at that time were friends who were Hindu. They wouldn’t let me walk around by myself. There was a young woman who lived in my building who actually tried to push me down the staircase. It was a really, really tough situation.

My parents were feeling it very hard because they lived in New Jersey and had no way of knowing if I was okay.

When I was finally able to get out of the city, I got on a train to Ealing, where I grew up. We got back home, and my father sat me down. He said that “when you go back to New York, I would prefer that you didn’t cover your head anymore.”

And then there was one young woman who prior to the 9/11 attacks had been wearing a head scarf to cover her hair, but also chose to wear a scarf—so that all you could see of her face was her eyes. And now, post 9/11, she had made a decision to still wear her head scarf but she took off her scarf because she was worried what might happen if somebody saw her dressed like that.

For the first time I was able to look into this girl’s face, and she looked back into my face, and I felt so much relieved. Here I was blaming who I was being and blending in, and this young woman alone was there representing my faith and my tradition.

I made a decision that I would no longer hide who I am. I would make a point not just to play the part but also to look the part, to be the best of my ability. And that if somebody had a question they wanted answered, I would take full responsibility to tell my story and my narrative and not let somebody else define for others what I actually am.

DEBORAH BRODERICK: September starts the hottest recruitment period for communications, designed for those we hope will be part of the next fall’s freshmen class. On September 11, our art director was overseeing the printing of all the school viewbooks.

That year’s design had right on page 1 what we considered to be our signature photograph—the view down Fifth Avenue with the arch in the foreground and the Twin Towers rising right behind it.

The image exemplified how we saw ourselves, in the heart of Greenwich Village and close to the world’s financial center.

RYAN STEINER: Two days afterwards, even though everyone is still trying to figure out how to deal with the emotional impact of people, it is looking at brochures and saying, “What are we going to do about the fact that we have the Twin Towers on our recruiting brochure that’s just about to get mailed? Should we pull them? Should we mail them? Should we cancel Parents Weekend?”

LYNNE BROWN: The big decision was, would we go ahead with it?

JOHN SEXTON: We said, “We’re not going to call it off. But we will also reschedule for anybody who would prefer not to come this weekend.”

BOB BERNE: People really appreciated that we were open for business, that we were explaining what we did, and how safe the students were. How lucky we were in some sense. They really appreciated—

LYNNE BROWN: That’s how we could handle it. Jay and John were around all that weekend, greeting parents. It was an immediate exemplar to anybody who was here that we take care of students.

Letter from the parent of a CAS sophomore:

I cannot thank you and your staff enough for the experience with NYU….

It was absolutely terrifying at the time of the attack. I knew I would not be on the street and on route to class at that time. I could barely function at work because I had not heard from her.

When she returned from class and reported to Cairn Sports Center, she was eventually able to contact her father. For her, 9/11 meant witnessing the destruction of the second tower, but that was not it for me. She was fine and that she could not believe how wonderfully NYU was handling everything. Although she had very little money at the time and no cell phone, she felt very comfortable to me and I was very grateful. I wanted her to come home but she said she had not heard from it.

Letter from the parent of the Stern junior:

Parents who shy away from large universities on the premise that their children will be mere numbers rather than people obviously have no experience with NYU.

Parents Weekend
Admissions officers in New York say the city still appears to hold considerable magic for many….

JOHN BECKMAN: Larry Silverstein had successfully bid for the World Trade Center.

RICH STANLEY: There was huge concern about the impact it would have on this institution, but when the chips were really down, when the city that we were so much a part of was under assault, it was a moment of tremendous generosity.

JOHN SEXTON: It's unimaginable what they did.

JOHN BECKMAN: But I think that there was actually a slight tendency for people to pull apart and fend for themselves, to become savages.

LARRY SILVERSTEIN: Like all of us, I look at dystopian films—and they all show this terrible side of humanity, this tendency for people to pull apart and fend for themselves, to become savages.

JOHN BECKMAN: Does it introduce this concept of preparedness. You're never prepared for things you don't think about, and nobody thought ahead of time about those events occurring the way they did. But we started to think about risk management differently.

BOB BERNE: We actually got some federal funds, and we started the Center for Catastrophe Preparedness and Response, which provided research funding for faculty to do work on simulations, on first responders, on the way police respond and how they worked with one another, on counseling.

LIVINE BROWN: Our decision in every instance was to do it, not to pull back. It instilled in us how we were doing with a symbolism, and we were conscious of it.

LIVINE BROWN: We decided this is the time when you play it up.

“WE ARE SUCH A NEW YORK PLACE”

I've done several programs at national conferences on the University’s reaction to 9/11.

JOHN SEXTON: And we broke ground on Fumon Hall at the law school, the first groundbreaking in New York City after 9/11. That was deliberate.

JOHN SEXTON: We then redeployed our security force opposed to checking the general safety in the community and using card readers and turnstiles. But that's lasted.

JOHN SEXTON: It's interesting that your senses sometimes have a more accurate memory than your brain. The things I remember are: no planes in the sky but constant helicopter noise. It's still unnerving for me when I hear too much helicopter noise, because that's what you heard as a backdrop for several days.

JOHN SEXTON: Second, although it didn't come back as the same first immediate assault on your nose and eyes, what did stay was that smell. It was a smell like no other. It had an electric, and plastic, and material aspect to it. But it was so hard to keep your mind away from what else it was.

JOHN SEXTON: At home, I look north toward the Empire State Building. Right after 9/11, the city closed down all the lights on the Chrysler Building, the Empire State Building, all the skyscrapers.

JOHN SEXTON: I remember going home that night, and it was the Empire State Building, all the skyscrapers. Down all the lights on the Chrysler Building, the Empire State Building, all the skyscrapers.

JOHN SEXTON: Night after night, I'd come home after those days, I'd pull up my shade, and there would be the blackout when Britain was under siege.

JOHN SEXTON: It went at least two weeks that changed. All of a sudden, one night—it wasn't like they announced it—I get home, I lift up the shade, and there's the Empire State Building. I broke down crying, it was that relief of, Was the city ever going to seem normal again? And there it was.
JOHN SEXTON
the Visionary

2002
NORMAN DORSEN: In May 2001, John’s appointment was announced. In June, he entered into a co-presidency with Jay for the coming year and asked me to chair the transition team.

DIANE VU: My first job here, in 2001-02, was to be the deputy director of the transition team.

When I met John in the early 1990s, I was the chief legal strategist and managing counsel at a Fortune 250 company, very involved in my legal career.

John and I were on a panel together and took opposite stands on whether there could be global legal education. Nevertheless, we became very good friends throughout the decade. I ended up here because he offered me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be in on the ground floor of his vision.

It did seem a bit of a risk. He couldn’t identify what my job would be, where I’d work, how much money I would make. It was a leap of faith. But I haven’t regretted it a day. I was quite familiar with John’s legacy at the law school—some of the pioneering things he had done there and the innovations that affected all of legal education. The vision he spooked out very broadly for his presidency sounded as if it might be similarly a transformation of higher education.

TOM BISHOP: John Sexton brought that kind of vision to the leadership of the University, which enabled us to move not only chronologically but psychologically into the 21st century.
ELLEN SCHALL: When you move to a university stage where you can’t possibly know all the students—although people call him John and stop him on the street for a hug—it took a little while for him to figure out the big moves that would end up transforming the University. But in the beginning, he had one idea that was very powerful, which was that the University would be a common enterprise, not just a collection of a lot of schools.

When I was a faculty member, I knew the law school, of course, because I was an alumn, and I knew the Wagner School. But you know that movie Pleasantville, where everything starts out in black and white, and then you get color? When I became a dean, it felt like the rest of the University shifted from black and white to color.

All of a sudden, I knew something about all the other parts. I remember there was a conversation about the dental school and graduate medical education, an issue I had never thought about for a second. And yet all the deans were invited to think not about their school but about the big issues that were affecting the University.

JOHN SEXTON: No single person or small group of people, no matter how well intentioned, can define the full ambit of what the University should be, and no simple aggregation of special interests can conceive and constitute the community’s vision. The University must begin to operate as an indivisible organism, where each part simultaneously attends to collectivity and individuality.

ELLEN SCHALL: That instinct and insistence that you care not just about the school where you were the dean but that you commit yourself to learning about and caring about and promoting the other parts is an important shift in people’s consciousness.

BOB GROSSMAN: I had been section chief of neuroradiology at University of Pennsylvania for almost 20 years when I had the opportunity to be chair of the department of radiology at the Medical Center. It was a bit of a challenge to go from a place where the department of radiology was the number one NIH-ranked department in the United States to a department that didn’t have any NIH ranking.

I didn’t know that much about the institution. The medical school and the department of radiology had some very good people, but the department didn’t have any real structure. You didn’t have to break down barriers, you had to create them. There was no organization chart.

One funny thing happened as I was interviewing for the job. They hadn’t sent me that much information, so I tried to piece together an organization chart on my own.

I went to the head of the search committee, and he said, “You did a very good job. I think I’ll do it.”

When I became dean in 2007, I thought it was an institution with very good doctors and scientists that had rested on its laurels. There was no vision about what the place could be. It was the NYU way. This is the way it works. It must have been a very frustrating situation for people who had stayed here through all that time if you had higher aspirations or had been to institutions that were more forward thinking.

There were excellent people. The patients were really taken care of. Great nursing. Some really great scientists. But the atmosphere was not well aligned, so you had no vision about what the place could be. It was an organization chart. And from the teens and 20s into the low 30s. So the challenge of restoring the Medical Center’s stature.

With the merger over between Mount Sinai and NYU, the University confronted the challenge of restoring the Medical Center’s stature.
$155 million a year. The life support was patent income from a drug called Remicade, which was going to be lost when it went off patent in 2017. We also had no systems, no electronic health records, nothing. We were ranked 36 in NIH funding and heading down.

MARTY LIPTON: In 2000, in my role as chairman of the University board, I approached Kenneth Langone, a graduate of NYU’s Stern School of Business, a trustee of the University, and an enormously successful businessman, about accepting the chairmanship of the Medical Center board and helping to resolve the problems left in the wake of the unsuccessful merger. Ken declined, saying that his principal interest was the Stern School, but I importuned him to consider the Medical Center chairmanship. He agreed to visit the center and meet some of the faculty.

After he made a second visit, I called him, hoping his interest might have been piqued. As soon as I learned he was in his office, I said, “I’ll be there in five minutes,” hung up the phone, and walked over to talk to him in person. To my relief and the enormous benefit of the center, he accepted the chairmanship and said, “Marty, you know I never invest my time without investing my money.” With that, he gave me a $100 million contribution.

The first gift remained anonymous until 2008, when Ken and Elaine Langone pledged a second $100 million, bringing the total to $200 million, the largest gift in the Medical Center’s history.

KEN LANGONE: Chair of the NYU Langone Medical Center Board of Trustees since 1999; Vice Chair of the NYU Board of Trustees since 1997; Vice Chair of the Stern Board of Overseers since 2003 (member since 1993); MBA, Stern, 1960.

KEN LANGONE: This institution had a fantastic track record for the quality of its care and for having some of the greatest doctors in the world. I have met absolutely remarkable people at all levels. But there was a disconnect between much of the physical plant and the caliber of the work it housed.

When I was a student at NYU in the late ’50s, I went to what was then called the GBA, Graduate Business School, down on Trinity Place. The original building was an old, four-story walkup. It was cold in the winter, hot in the summer. And the business school had courses scattered all over downtown Manhattan. It was really, really a catch-can.

There’s no doubt that I probably compressed what might have taken me 10 years of practical experience into more like three or four years by virtue of making a dual effort of going to school at night at the same time as I was working during the day.

So what drove me to make the gift was first and foremost a very strong sense of obligation. Because the opportunity I had was the difference between getting a degree and getting an education. There’s no question that it has dramatically enhanced my career.

BOB BERNE: Ken has really infused his own entrepreneurship and drive into the Medical Center.

BOB GROSSMAN: It’s a hackneyed term, but he is a force of nature. His ability to talk to people and his emotional intelligence are unparalleled.

When you talk about the performance of the Medical Center, Ken deserves enormous credit. I speak to him two or three times a day.

BOB BERNE: On virtually any metric—whether it’s the curriculum we began in 2007 or increasing our research profile or growing our faculty practice or reaching out to a large number of patients across the metropolitan area and around the country—we are returning to where we were in our heyday. And improving.
“TENDING TO THEIR SOULS” CREATING COMMUNITY

LINDA MILLS: John had a very different vision of how we could now take the University to the next level. But before we got to the global network universe, we needed to build a meaningful outside-the-classroom experience for students.

We knew that after their first semester or year at NYU, too many students were leaving. They weren’t happy. We had not tended to their souls. That was the work we had to do—to think logically, emotionally, and spiritually about how we could now take the University to the next level. But before we got to the global network universe, we needed to build a network university, we needed to build a Wellness Exchange Hotline at (212) 443-9999 or just 9999 from any on-campus phone. We had to rethink how we were providing for them. They weren't happy. We had not tended to their souls.

JOHN BECKMAN: We had to rethink how we were going to approach it. One, we were going to make help available all the time. And two, we were going to be forward leaning, not wait for people to come to us.

LINDA MILLS: Linda led the clinical people into what was called “Wellness Exchange,” which is paired with the presidential welcome ceremony for all freshmen when they start in the fall. It was a collaborative effort between the counseling center and the Division of Student Affairs. It was a way to get the word out, make people aware of it.

JOHN BECKMAN: Many counseling services are not very well known on campuses. We turned to Liz Swados, a Tisch School of the Arts professor and famous director who has done so much for young people, to present content in a particular way, they get referred to therapy. The follow-up is significant. We don’t just say, “Well, you might want to do this.” We combined physical and mental health and brought everyone together to say that the well-being of our students is absolutely paramount.
The Reality Show

OPENING DANCE + INSECURITIES

DEBRA LABORTE: When John got the nod to be president, my predecessor, Naomi Levine, decided it was time to step down. She had been at the University for 26 plus years, and I’m not sure if it was a remarkable job.

And so, when John asked me to take on this role, my first reaction was: “How can anybody follow Naomi’s shoes?” Naomi was still and is known around New York City as “The Billion Dollar Woman,” having raised over $3 billion by 2008; a multi-billion dollar endowment. Led by Debra LaMorte and her team, NYU Arts and Science to “rank among the best in the country.”

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The Reality Show has been surprisingly absolutely, unbelievably positive. Students love it, they look forward to it, and they talk about it from year to year. The kids who were in it are recognized in school. The Reality Show has as much rehearsal or maybe even more than a Broadway show. Every single song act has probably been rewritten three or four times, rewritten again, and then tried on in full.

We work all summer. Toward the end, we work six days a week. The kids are amazing.

And every year the show changes. The basic issues don’t change, but the emphasis does. We’re totally connected with mental health services and Student Affairs. We try to be relevant, first of all, to the times we’re in.

The Partners Plan was conceptualized by John Sexton to enact his conviction—realized during his tenure as dean of the law school—that the success of the professional school depends on the quality of Arts and Science and to implement the recommendations of the transition team that the University bolster the Faculty of Arts and Science to “rank among the best in the country.”

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The Reality Show is performed every year with three different casts for incoming classes in New York, NYU Abu Dhabi, and NYU Shanghai.
BILL BERKLEY: Usually when people commit five, 10 million dollars, that money is for endowment. This was people committing money to be spent. It was a jump start to improve the University.

DICK FOLEY: With that mixture of Sexton vision and charm and persistence, we had a set of trustees each of whom made an investment up front. Given their help, the University was prepared to do something that very few other universities, very few other boards would have dared do—go into the endowment and loan us some money.

TONY WELTERS: I always thought about it as more a venture transaction. High risk, high reward. And I think all would agree that the dividends for both the institution and society will be immeasurable for decades, and hopeful dividends for both the institution and society.

JOHN SEXTON: And I think all would agree that the only mistake you can make as a department is to not appoint an A+. If you decide that you haven’t found the best. We did have searches and recruitments that took multiyears to succeed. But we kept the budget lines open. We said, “We’ll stay with you as long as you’re willing. Don’t compromise.”

PETER LENNIE: It was characteristically ambitious. It was done with great panache, and it worked.

The six trustees and their spouses who backed the Partners Plan were Bill Berkley, Laurence Fink, Helen Kimmel, Marty Lipton, Tony Welters, Susan Berkley, Tony Movshon, and Leonard Wilf.

JESS BEHNABIB: The Partners Fund would match $150 million in University resources to $60 million in donations from a group of trustees each of whom made an investment up front. Given their help, the University was prepared to do something that very few other universities, very few other boards would have dared do—go into the endowment and loan us some money.

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JOHN SEXTON: That turned out to be true.

DICK FOLEY: The category of recruitment that was perhaps the most unusual, although now other universities are using its strategy, was so-called midcareer hires. These hires are usually associate professors who already have tenure at another university. In some cases, they might be very, very young full professors, but more often they’re associate professors, 8, 10, 12 years out.

Looking for those midcareer people is harder work than looking for junior people or very senior people. In almost every discipline, there’s an established market for fresh PhDs, a set way in which the best graduate programs publicize the best graduates and universities compete for them. At the very senior level, there’s not perfect agreement but often very large agreement about who the very, very best are. At the midcareer level, it just takes a lot of work to identify potential talent. But if you do it well, the upside is pretty big.

You get all the benefits of a mature scholar, but, unlike more senior people, these people can still have 30-year careers at NYU.

We weren’t afraid of going after faculty at any university, so if there was someone at Harvard or Princeton, Yale or Stanford whom we really wanted, we were more successful than not in getting them.

But we also told departments not to be snobs. “Go look at the universities that are very, very good, but that are not the top five or six.”

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Because you’re going to find unbelievable talent there.” That turned out to be true.
NYU has made a name for itself by spanning two new areas in biology—genomics and systems biology. Comparative ge- nomics looks at the genomic features and gene networks across organisms to see what humans share with, say, fruit flies and worms (it turns out we share a lot). What humans share with, say, fruit flies and systems biology. Comparative genomics looks at the genomic features and gene networks across organisms to see how far you can go. The major question we posed for Gloria and her colleagues was: Tell us how the investment should be directed.

DICK FOLEY: You couldn’t be a major Arts and Science school without having a major presence in biology. The question we posed for Gloria and her colleagues was: Tell us how the investment should be directed.

GLORIA CORUZZI: The Partners initiative enabled us to recruit scientists into genomics at a level that we couldn’t do in an urban environment. They weren’t at NYU to start with, so it wasn’t a question of extinguishing things that had existed before. The sciences at Washington Square were all core disciplines. No worthwhile university can exist without them, so they have to be sustained. And the ways we chose to excel fit perfectly reasonably within an urban setting. Then there were fields in which the department did not have great historical strength. So it really was an adventure and, in some degree, risky. If you can’t build on strengths, you don’t really know how far you can go. The major investments were in these new domains. In biology, Phil Furmanski as chair and later Gloria Coruzzi were very clear about the future directions. They knew genomics needed new facilities. We brought in a couple of people who study evolutionary genomics across microbes, plants, and flies. Even though they study three different organisms, their evolutionary genomic approach has really enabled them to synergize. We worked with not only those of us within Arts and Science—myself and Peter Lennie—but with Dave McLaughlin and John Sexton, who was deeply involved as well.

GLORIA CORUZZI: Our genome hires were from places like Harvard, Stanford, and Rockefeller. We brought in a couple of people who study evolutionary genomics across microbes, plants, and flies. Even though they study three different organisms, their evolutionary genomic approach has really enabled them to synergize.

DAVE MCLAUGHLIN: Our work in comparative functional plant genomics makes natural use of the New York Botanical Gardens and the Museum of Natural History and the databases those institutions have, in addition to Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, which is near New York City.

NYU is the largest private university in the United States—and New York City is our home. It is quite magnificent. With Partners, we asked departments to think, How does the location in New York City benefit your work? We knew genomics needed new facilities. We looked around, identified an old commercial building on Waverly, and decided that would be an ideal genomic center. It was a challenging physical location because its facade was historically protected. But the result is this magical place, not only in the design for researchers, with open labs and people communicating and biologists sitting next to computer scientists and biophysicists, but because you see the students as well.

NYU Maximized Space Utilization on 7,500-sf Lot University Cleverly Carves Out 70,000 sf for the Center for Genomics & Systems Biology.

Turn-of-the-century brick buildings in historic Greenwich Village might make a condo developer salivate, but they are not ideal for cutting-edge scientific research. The ceilings are too low, the rooms too small, and the mechanical systems leave much to be desired. If you work for New York University (NYU), however, that is what’s available in your neighborhood. Architects working with NYU have devised creative ways to transform these adjacent buildings into a single home for the new Center for Genomics & Systems Biology.

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“…”
A COMMUNITY WITHOUT WALLS

THE CENTER FOR SOFT MATTER RESEARCH

DAVID GRIER
Professor of Physics since 2003
Chair since 2008
Director of the Center for Soft Matter Research from 2003–04

GLENNYS FARRAR
Professor of Physics since 1997
Chair of the Center for Cosmology and Particle Physics from 1998–2001
Director of the Center for Cosmology and Particle Physics from 2001–08

Soft materials pervade our everyday lives—from dairy foods, whose creamy- ness depends on the number and size distribution of air bubbles, to petroleum products such as motor oil and gasoline. Soft matter research explores how nature organizes these systems and can enhance products’ function. Pharmaceuti- cals, in particular, benefit from physicists’ growing understanding of how molecules self-assemble, paving the way for new drug-delivery techniques.

DAVID GRIER: Most research universities raise money to build the endowment. The idea here was to build the infrastructure, to build up the faculty, to create something that’s inherently endowing.

That seemed to me very, very creative, as creative as what the University did in the ’70s, which had a huge payoff in the long run. My understanding is that when the Partners program started, the administration asked the departments, “Do you have a plan?”

In 1998, the physics department had just recruited Glennys Farrar from Rutgers, and she had a vision—sort of to try to build up the physics department all at once in all the different areas, but to focus on particular areas where there isn’t strength in the city, or anywhere around, where NYU can shine and could arguably be the best.

Glenrys Farrar was the first woman at Princeton to receive a PhD in physics.

GLENNYS FARRAR: I was originally a particle theorist, but I was making a transition, broad- ening out into doing a lot of astrophysics and cosmology in addition to particle theory. However, I had no experience whatever in anything administrative. That was perhaps a legacy of being female in physics departments, but all my efforts had been in research. I hadn’t even chaired a committee.

I love New York, but the physics institutes here were quite weak. I was assured that there was no chance NYU would give me the job as chair, but some people from outside said, “You could really help by going straight into the dean about what the physics department needs.”

Phil Furmanski interviewed me. He explained that there were resources that hadn’t been there before, which were being used to create excellence in different departments. In this way, they improved departments like philosophy and biology, and, later, economics.

He had asked the physics department for a plan, and their plan had been, “Well, let’s hire one person who’ll work with this guy, and another person who’ll work with that guy.” It didn’t add up as a persuasive plan. And so they made a decision to have an outside chair, and they were interviewing.

As I understood it, there had been a discus- sion that physics would shed its experimental side in order to save space and money and maybe be a simulation shop to do computing analysis that would be tied into Courant. I told Phil that this was just a totally ridic- ulous plan, because the unique thing physics brings to the world was where you had nature imposing something you had to figure out, but it was also mathematically rigorous and well-formulatable. If you couldn’t keep that experimental part of it and just did numerical simulations, you might as well save yourself the trouble of having a physics department.

Glenrys had felt she had called and offered me the job.

It was very unexpected, because people had told me that they weren’t looking for someone with my views.

What made me take it seriously was that I thought there was huge potential. It wasn’t a bad department, with people who weren’t smart enough to figure something out. The people who were here were very, very good.

The big issue was hiring.

PETER LENNIE: One of the things that was unusual and made life a bit tougher was bring- ing in a cohort of junior faculty. When you’re establishing a new field, generally you want to anchor it with some of the senior people, not because they’re necessarily any more talented but because they’re more experienced.

Junior folks have to get tenure. They often have families. They have to establish a career. It’s a really significant added burden to be a junior person in a group where you’re responsi- ble for building the department as well.

But Glennys Farrar hired some fabulous young people. It was also a good demonstration of the potency of reaching out, if you want to convince people that you’re serious about establishing a presence in a new field, that’s the way to do it.

The astrophysics group was the first hires of real consequence in physics. And then came the second round, with David Grier, Paul Chaikin, and David Pine.

GLENNYS FARRAR: I’d formulated the idea that we should have something that eventually turned into the Center for Cosmology and Particle Physics. Because there was a very strong tradition in particle physics and very good people there, and also because astronomy and astrophysics were entering a fascination- growth period.

The other thing I wanted to do was to have an experimental component that would be at the Square but connect to other strengths at NYU, like the medical school.

Soft matter physics came to my mind because for a new, experimental endeavor you don’t want to compete head to head with really great institutions. They will simply get the best people because the resources are so huge. But I came to understand by talking to people that at the time there was no soft matter physics in the US.

It was highly appreciated in Europe, and there were individuals like Paul Chaikin who were doing it, but there was no group of people doing it. When I learned about this, I called Paul.

The field was just at the core. It didn’t make a lot of sense to Paul to come up with this idea of something grand. He said he had called in a timely way, because he had a second postdoc turn him down who didn’t want to live in the broodsocks in Princeton.
Then I resigned. I was actually getting his advice about David Grier—and I could see that if maybe Chakrin himself was another opportunity—and I had not known David Pine at the beginning. It was old verging on dismal. It was this new field of soft condensed matter physics. It's very popular, because it has ties to physics to research in finance.

Then we asked the University to knock out all the interior walls, because we didn't want to be divided. The labs we built are big and open. People move into them and set up based on what they're doing, what their interests are, rather than based on who they are and where they're from.

We have a whole slew of undergraduates working in the lab, too. These are not bite-sized jobs. These are people who are doing research, answering questions that don't have answers yet.

My sense was that the reason people most wanted to come was the opportunity to build up something in soft matter and to be with each other. So getting decent space was essential.
“WE’RE NEVER SATISFIED”

PETER LENNIE: Academic reputations change incredibly slowly. Nobody can expect that the big, valuable, important investments NYU made in science at Washington Square will immediately change NYU’s reputation as a powerhouse in science. But there’s no question that the investments have been recognized in their respective fields.

BILL BERKLEY: The Partners plan went fabulously. We were able to recruit at the A, A+ level, hiring people, funding them without having to worry about budgetary constraints from the past. It has worked out exceptionally well.

DICK FOLEY: One of the great things about NYU, we’ve always said, is that we’re never satisfied. Now we had a whole set of departments that were strong, thriving. But that doesn’t mean you can rest on your laurels. A remarkable thing that happened in the Partners period, not just in FAS but across the University generally, was that our profile began to expand to the extent that our profile increased in the STEM subjects—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—which positioned us to do even greater things in the next 10 years.

MATTHEW SANTIBREDO: There are lots of great universities out there, but not all of them get it. Here the sense was that the liberal arts undergird everything. Our liberal arts faculty is really, very strong. The challenge was to put them in the way of our undergraduates—even our freshmen in their first year. Because faculty like working with students, even young students who are not fully up on the bibliography or the methodologies. They like their inquisitiveness. And we have extraordinary students in the College of Arts and Science.

That’s fine in theory and lip service at many places, but there’s a resource allocation that flows from it. At least for a time, the deans of other schools understood that while they’re investing in their own faculty they also need to invest in the liberal arts faculty.

The college is the undergraduate liberal arts division. It serves students from all the schools, so there’s self-interest by the other schools in shoring it up. But the faculty in the college is the same faculty that teaches in the Graduate School of Arts and Science. So it wasn’t just the teaching but also the research mission that was strengthened by the sort of recruitment we were able to do.

RICHARD SCHECHNER: Thirty years ago, when I got here, I would say, “I’m from NYU, but I’m at the School of the Arts, where I do such and such.” I would play all my cards. Now I can play my NYU card. That’s a big difference in prestige.

The leaders are a little bit corporate, but they’re also visionaries. If the world is going to be corporatized, better from John Sexton’s point of view than BP’s.

TONY WELTERS: It all goes back to that first cup of coffee that continues to cost me a lot. But it’s in furtherance of a great vision.

When you wake up in the middle of the night and hear that one of your faculty members becomes a Nobel Laureate, that makes you feel good about the investment. Or when you talk to students and they say to you, “But for X faculty member, I would not have considered NYU.” Or when you’re trying to figure out the future of the arts, the leaders, and the cities and you hear, “NYU’s the only place that’s made that one of its highest priorities.”

That’s how it pays off.

FOCUS ON THE LIBERAL ARTS

RICHARD SCHECHNER: I would play all my cards.
In the life of a university, some issues are resolved over time while others erupt, recede, and reappear under changing circumstances.

NYU has been at the forefront of graduate student union issues since the late 1990s. The University established a precedent in 2000 when it initially bargained with the United Auto Workers (UAW), as well as when it did not renew the contract with the union five years later.

BOB BERNE: Because we’re a private university and not a public one, we fall under the NLRB, the National Labor Relations Board. For many years, the NLRB said that graduate students could not unionize.

Our position is that graduate students are primarily students, not employees. The teaching activities they’re engaged in are part and parcel of their degree.

We’re not anti-union; we just didn’t think graduate students should be unionized.

KATE STIMPSON: Who’s in charge of the classroom? I believe passionately that the classroom is the faculty’s. You have to be fair and you have procedures in place. And you have to do things the right and moral way.

But NYU was not the place for a union. This was not your ordinary workplace. We were dealing with faculty and students. We were dealing with classrooms, to me a special and—I’m with John Sexton—a sacred space.

That’s what I fought for.

BOB BERNE: In the late 1990s, when the NLRB had a majority of Democratic appointees, they changed their opinion and said, with NYU as the test case, that graduate students now could unionize.

At that point, we could have refused to bargain with the union—and it would go to court. The court would decide, as it does in some NLRB cases, whether the decision of the NLRB held. But NYU entered into informal conversations, as a result of our conversations, we agreed not to take the NLRB decision to court. Our condition was that the union would send us a letter, which it did, stating that it would not bargain over what we called academic issues, such as qualifications for degrees and fellowships.

BOB BERNE: We bargained over many months, and around 2001, we signed a four-year contract to form a graduate student union.

Over the course of that contract, the union brought a number of grievances, specifically around the academic issues we thought we

DATE: March 1, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: The University Community
FROM: Harvey J. Stedman, Provost
RE: A Decision on Graduate Assistant Unionization

Over the past several months, we have consulted extensively with members of the University Community...

One thing has been clear as a result of our consultative process. There is a widely-held value across the University that has been articulated by both those who believe that we should have challenged the certification of the UAW in the courts and by those who believe that we should start bargaining with the union—the importance of protecting the academic nature and quality of what we do.

In the time since the results of the graduate assistant unionization election were announced and the union requested that we bargain, we have been exploring various ways to insure that the bargaining process, if it were to take place, would not diminish the quality of our academic activities such as how we structure, teach, and staff the curriculum and the content of the curriculum; admissions policies and degree requirements, and decisions on academic progress for students; hiring and evaluation criteria for faculty; and conditions of fellowships...

... The UAW has acknowledged the importance of removing these issues from the collective bargaining setting, and this will be a key element as we move forward.
had agreed they wouldn’t. They got involved in who would teach the courses. They got involved in the time students should spend in getting their degrees. We let the union know that we thought these grievances were outside the bounds, but they went ahead.

Then in 2004, when the Brown University case was decided before the NLRB, which now had Republican appointees, they reversed the NYU decision. New graduate students did not have the right to unionize.

This was around the time that the NYU contract was expiring. So the university had a choice: Would we voluntarily continue the relationship with the union? Because we didn’t have to. Or would we just end it and go back to the way it was before the initial contract? It was a tough call, and the campus was divided. There were many people who thought we should continue to recognize the union.

Other felt specifically that because of the attempts to enlarge the scope of the bargaining around academic issues, it was not appropriate. We engaged in a number of processes to get a sense of the community. We formed a Senate committee and asked them for recommendations. We went to the Provost Academic Priorities Committee, a group of faculty members, and asked them to formulate recommendations. We had extant conversations with the deans, who often held conversations within their own schools and faculties.

The Senate, Academic Priorities, and deans all recommended that we not renew the contract. We followed that recommendation. The result was a strike by the graduate students who wanted a union.

JUDITH MILLER: The French department drafted a statement in support of all students’ decisions. “The professors in the French department consider their graduate students to be their own school and faculties.” We got involved in a number of processes to get a sense of the community. We formed a Senate committee and asked them for recommendations. We went to the Provost Academic Priorities Committee, a group of faculty members, and asked them to formulate recommendations. We had extant conversations with the deans, who often held conversations within their own schools and faculties.

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KATE STRIMPS: The UAW’s regional office was just up the street on University Place. For almost a semester, we had pots and pans. And the picket lines would chant. Not everybody went out on strike. Some union supporters went out. A few faculty stopped teaching. We had to put in place measures that would protect the undergraduates who were being taught.

And then there were faculty concerns. Initial worries were there was a fear that if the students unions were recognized, the union would negotiate with the university about courses. This was around the time that the NYU contract was expiring. So the university had a choice: Would we voluntarily continue the relationship with the union? Because we didn’t have to. Or would we just end it and go back to the way it was before the initial contract? It was a tough call, and the campus was divided. There were many people who thought we should continue to recognize the union.

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BOB BERNE: We filled in with other people teaching the courses—or people taught off campus.

KATE STRIMPS: Would I do it again? Yes, absolutely. The classroom is the domain of the faculty and of the students. For me, that’s the moral heart of the matter. But was it hard? Friendships were obviously tested. And my reputations as a progressive was obviously tested. Traitor, traitor. It was painful, very painful for many of us.

The leaders [of the movement to unionize] were my students. I would go in, and this one student would stand up and read out of her little notebook. “Marx says”—as if I didn’t know who Marx was.

It was a Groucho Marx, not a Karl Marx, moment.

BOB BERNE: The strike wound down over the course of the academic year. And we ended up going back to a situation where we didn’t have a union.

I think there was some lingering animosity toward those of us who made the decision not to recognize the union, not to negotiate a contract. But the campus was divided. You would either recognize the union or you wouldn’t. There wasn’t a middle ground.

The issue of unionization would come back several years later and remain a focus of ongoing campus debate and policy.

When NYU sold the Heights in the 1970s, it was also forced to give up its school of engineering, which merged with the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn. Many of the NYU engineering faculty then migrated to Poly.

Richard Thorsten: NYU sought on several occasions to get back into engineering, unsuccess- fully, but it nevertheless tried. Ever since they lost the engineering school at the Heights, they had this nagging desire to get back into it.

Peter Lewis: When I was first drawn into the discussions, it wasn’t clear that we needed a school of engineering. I’m a great fan of engineers. But a school is expensive to get, and it’s expensive to do engineering well, at least as expensive as doing lab science.

So when the Poly opportunity came up, there were students who had cold feet about the cost of developing a distinguished presence. Because there’s no value in having an engineering school unless it’s going to be a good one, a great one. If the school becomes as strong as the science departments in Courant, then it’ll be great for NYU.

Sreenan: There were alumni who were concerned because they misinterpreted what NYU wanted. They thought NYU Poly would just build those buildings, use them for its purposes, and devalue engineering.

The board of trustees of Poly was also concerned, in part because Poly has been a place where top graduates could get an education. They worried that the merger would erode Poly’s social relevance.

And then there were faculty concerns. Initial discussions started with the notion that the tenure track would be in the new school, at a new school, in the new space, and of course that didn’t go very well.

The first overtone toward merger did not advance. But key trustees and academic leaders of both institutions continued to discuss the possibility. They went for NYU and for Poly and kept open the channels of communication. By 2007, another round of discussions began, leading to an affiliation agreement as a first step to a full merger.
JOHN SEXTON: The Courant people in particular were eager to have us bring Poly in. They believed that the absence of engineering was going to inhibit the growth of science generally at the University. We were also hearing it more and more from some of the really strong scientists at some of the professional schools, such as the dental school and even Tisch, with its Game Center.

With Jerry Hultin on the scene as Poly’s president, we were able to propose a new framework for Poly—to keep the corporations of NYU and Poly separate until both sides were satisfied.

RICHARD THORSEN: Technology and engineering no longer can operate in their own little bubble. There are so many opportunities and needs for technology to interact with other disciplines.

Engineers and scientists develop new materials. Well, so does the dental profession. So does the medical profession, in terms of materials that are compatible with the human body and will contribute to the long life of artificial limbs and implants.

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RICHARD THORSEN: The agreement that has been worked out between Poly and NYU is a two-step process. Step one is we enter into affiliation, which has a precise definition at the state level. But the two institutions are still independent for most purposes.

Both institutions are working toward the process of consolidation, when we move inside NYU in the corporate sense and become the 18th school of NYU.

On June 24, 2008, the New York Board of Regents approved the affiliation of Brooklyn Polytechnic and New York University, creating the Polytechnic Institute of NYU.

SREENI: For Poly, the real advantage is that it becomes part of a bigger research university, which gives a necessary breadth for faculty and students. For NYU, in this age you really cannot claim to be a great university without some basis in technology and engineering.

RICHARD THORSEN: The relationship with NYU has done two things. First of all, we have been able to become more selective in our admissions process. That’s the glow of NYU. Also—and these numbers are dramatic—we’ve been able to recruit across the country in ways that we weren’t able to before.

At the graduate level, if you go to places in India and China, in the Middle East, everybody knows New York. New York University is a globally recognized institution. So we’ve had enormous growth in our graduate student enrollment, primarily driven by international enrollment.

President Hester would frequently refer to the engineering school as the jewel in NYU’s crown. This is the opportunity to put the jewel back in the crown.

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Engineers and scientists develop new materials. Well, so does the dental profession. So does the medical profession, in terms of materials that are compatible with the human body and will contribute to the long life of artificial limbs and implants.

Then there’s our continuing strength in the telecommunications arena, which touches the entertainment business, the business world. Stock transactions are all telecommunications-based.

JOHN SEXTON: The Courant people in particular were eager to have us bring Poly in. They believed that the absence of engineering was going to inhibit the growth of science generally at the University. We were also hearing it more and more from some of the really strong scientists at some of the professional schools, such as the dental school and even Tisch, with its Game Center.

With Jerry Hultin on the scene as Poly’s president, we were able to propose a new framework for Poly—to keep the corporations of NYU and Poly separate until both sides were satisfied.

RICHARD THORSEN: The agreement that has been worked out between Poly and NYU is a two-step process. Step one is we enter into affiliation, which has a precise definition at the state level. But the two institutions are still independent for most purposes.

Both institutions are working toward the process of consolidation, when we move inside NYU in the corporate sense and become the 18th school of NYU.

On June 24, 2008, the New York Board of Regents approved the affiliation of Brooklyn Polytechnic and New York University, creating the Polytechnic Institute of NYU.

SREENI: For Poly, the real advantage is that it becomes part of a bigger research university, which gives a necessary breadth for faculty and students. For NYU, in this age you really cannot claim to be a great university without some basis in technology and engineering.

RICHARD THORSEN: The relationship with NYU has done two things. First of all, we have been able to become more selective in our admissions process. That’s the glow of NYU. Also—and these numbers are dramatic—we’ve been able to recruit across the country in ways that we weren’t able to before.

At the graduate level, if you go to places in India and China, in the Middle East, everybody knows New York. New York University is a globally recognized institution. So we’ve had enormous growth in our graduate student enrollment, primarily driven by international enrollment.

President Hester would frequently refer to the engineering school as the jewel in NYU’s crown. This is the opportunity to put the jewel back in the crown.
Only after the recovery of downtown New York from 9/11 and the stabilizing of NYU’s finances—by implementing a 10-year budget cycle, eliminating the structural deficit, addressing deferred maintenance, and resolving the Medical Center situation—could the University’s leaders address NYU’s long-term academic needs.

Framework 2031 was an overarching strategic blueprint, offering guiding principles for the University’s academic direction and its necessary choices. Affirming NYU’s history, the plan noted that NYU could not do everything but would have to invest in excellence selectively. It ratified NYU’s global ambition, recognizing that the University had already embarked on that path and urging an intensification of NYU’s global commitment.

It also made clear that NYU did not have the requisite physical space in New York City to fulfill these academic ambitions.

JOHN SEXTON: The executive committee of the board asked that the University’s leadership develop a document that described the likely opportunities for and challenges to the University’s academic mission over the decades leading to the University’s bicentennial in 2031. The result, “NYU Framework 2031,” seemed the entire NYU community throughout the 2007-08 academic year, engaging an unprecedented number of faculty members, students, administrators, staff members, and alumni from all sectors of the University. Two dozen town hall meetings were held, and an online system was set up for collecting comments. Everything was shared with the board’s executives committee.

The Framework embraced a strategy for NYU built on the notion of NYU as a global network university. It had one of the first formal articulations of this new model of a research university: a global network anchored in New York City and Abu Dhabi, linked to smaller sites located throughout the world, each with its own defining characteristics—and all with academic programs of the highest excellence. An important tool in conceptualizing the shift in NYU’s approach to global education that had been under way for years, the Framework identified the global network as a defining element of NYU’s future.

JOHN SEXTON: By 2031, the 200th anniversary of New York University, New York City will be one of the 6 or 8 or 10 idea capitals, the great nodes of human activity at the highest level. Universities are the key, because their task is thought and creativity. They attract the talent class. So it’s vital to the future of New York that we build the intellectual, cultural, and educational infrastructure of the city.
NYU 2031: SECURING EXCELLENCE
BALANCING TOWN AND GOWN

Based on the recommendations of Framework 2031, the University began to develop NYU 2031, a plan focused on physical space. It was the first attempt in NYU’s history to take a long-term and strategic look at the University’s space needs in the context of its urban environment and to chart a space required to sustain its academic momentum in the coming decades.

NYU 2031 is not a “master plan,” for the University does not have a large, contiguous campus over which it can exercise control. Rather, it is a long-term strategic vision for how to provide the physical space needed for NYU’s long-range academic goals.

ALICIA HURLEY: Associate Vice President and Chief Government Affairs and Community Engagement since 2005; Director of the Office of Federal Relations from 2002–05; PhD, Steinhardt, 2003; MA, Steinhardt, 1998

LYNNE BROWN: I’ve been at the University for decades, watching NYU go from a regional, commuter-based school to a major national urban research university. It’s been a challenging role.

BOB BERNE: It’s important for NYU to be both thoughtful and deliberate about how it interacts with the local community and the built environment in New York. It’s fair to say that over the years, while we’ve had a general direction on where we wanted to go from a spatial point of view, we’ve been largely opportunistic in taking advantage of buildings that are for sale and sites that make sense, expanding in a way that created the physical personality of NYU.

ELLEN PETERSON-LEWIS: If you develop any metric that measures space—square feet per faculty member, square feet per student, any of the metrics that are typically used—NYU is off the charts on the low end. There are some institutions that have two and three more times as much space per faculty member or per student.

BOB BERNE: I think NYU is getting better at it. They’ve been doing this piecemeal, piecemeal, piecemeal. It’s important that they have a master plan.

ALICIA HURLEY: First and foremost, which was extraordinary at the time, we said, “We’re not going to put it all here”—in the Village. We had to come up with a strategy to say, “We really need to start looking outside of the area. What academically can work in different parts of the city?”

We started looking in Brooklyn, helped by the trends of the city and our affiliation with Poly. We have a lot going up near the health corridor on First Avenue, where Langone Medical Center is. The community board up there like partnerships with nonprofits, including universities.

ALICIA HURLEY: NYU 2031 is about trying to understand the community dimension of what we want to do for our future. It was our best effort to come up with a way forward that would allow us to grow here in the Washington Square area, but also in other parts of the city in a way that’s transparent and predictable.

BOB BERNE: Looking at the big picture and the next 20 or 30 years, it’s pretty clear that NYU’s going to need a large amount of space. Now we’ve created a roadmap that gives us and the community a sense of where we’d like to be.

BOB BERNE: We’re interested in engaging, even if we’ll never cede the authority to others to make our decisions.
going to build big buildings, build them on large avenues as opposed to smaller side streets. Here before you build new and demolish.

We had over 250 meetings. We had over a dozen open houses for the community, faculty, students. For many years people could say they didn’t know what NYU was doing. That changed with what scared everybody and made them very nervous about the institution. But nobody can say that anymore.

We’re surrounded by a lot of restrictions. So it really challenges the University about where we could grow in the area. When people talk about Greenwich Village, they think romantically of the 19th-century loft buildings, where it’s just small brownstones. But we had owned these super blocks, southeast of Washington Square Park. Why not add buildings where appropriate? It’s a lot of below-ground building, such as large auditoriums, music performance spaces. On the southernmost block, Coles gym, which has served us very well, is a wonderful space taking that and building a new gym—and being able to build academic and housing space up top.

At some point, we’re going to have to build on what is essentially land we already own in the middle of the area in Greenwich Village. We can’t keep accomplishing academic excellence on the backs of our community. And we’ve asked a lot of the community. Now it is time for us to say: We take some of this on ourselves.

ROSCOE BROWN: Architects dream big and they should. The city is here. This great city is here. There should have to fit in with the community. There’s always a push-pull.

EMILY FOLLO: NYU has tremendous physical impact on Village life. They are the largest single presence in the area.

What’s interesting, of course, is that many people who are part of that NYU community may object to what we’re doing. Hopefully, there is some balance. And maybe the University will listen a little bit to neighbors. But it’s a town-gown situation fraught with ongoing strain and tension.

DAVID ROBINSON: There are always going to be some kinds of conflict, particularly during a time of expansion. If you had told me when I was at NYU in 1967 that you’d have time of thousands of applicants to the freshman class, I would have called you crazy.

To some extent, consulting with the community is fine, but the community doesn’t see what expansion is going to do for them. They only see that it’s going to add traffic, add people: Why don’t you expand somewhere else? It’s important for Greenwich Village that NYU be successful, but it’s important for the Village that NYU not grow. That’s very hard to do when you have an institution for which growth is exciting.

BOB BERNE: It’s often forgotten that in 1976, when the city was at its lowest ebb and then began its resurgence, we began our resurgence. We have contributed intellectual capital. We’ve contributed physical space. We’ve contributed jobs and lots of things to the local community.

LYNNE BROWN: Greenwich Village, like all neighborhoods in New York, is very dynamic. It grows, it changes. When I came here in 1982, Lower Broadway didn’t look the way Lower Broadway does now. And Bond Street didn’t look the way Bond Street is looking now. NoNo had a different character, and so did Sixth Avenue. NYU’s part of that dynamism, but that’s not what I’m talking about.

So I don’t think the goal should be: Don’t change a thing and hearken back to a lost history. That’s an unrealistic goal. But what it does mean is that we have to approach the community with mutual respect, with a willingness to listen, to change our minds from time to time when what we hear is a good idea—and good ideas do flow in both directions.

I don’t think we’re there yet. But I hope what the community sees is a willingness to try.
After we decided we were going to make it a priority to drive up the percentage of our students who went away for at least one semester, it didn’t take long to notice that we were Eurocentric. So we asked Yee Nyakoe to begin to develop additional sites. We didn’t forbid him from starting additional sites in Europe—indeed, he started Berlin—but he also started looking at Shanghai and Acra and Buenos Aires.

We began to drive up the numbers by making some important changes. We wanted to make it easier for students to choose a continent as it was to choose a course. And we wanted to make it possible for students to move fluidly through the system.

The notion of them having to be able to get their general requirements done meant it. We wanted to make it as easy for a student to choose a continent as it was to choose a course. And we wanted to make it possible for students to move fluidly through the system.

This meant that they had to be able to get their general requirements done. It meant that, at least at some of the sites, premed kids or Tech kids would have to be able to advance in a specialized curriculum, or that Stem kids would be able to move through their curriculum at university. So we began to develop at each of the sites academic personalities that would attract students. London was economics and theater. Florence was art and the EU. Prague was music and journalism and transitional government. Acra was public health and economic development. And Shanghai was business.

FARHAD KAZERI: But the moment you begin to expand our international activities overseas, all kinds of issues come up. I was the vice provost when the 9/11 tragedy took place. We couldn’t reach anybody overseas. I was so afraid that the name of New York University would be a problem for our students abroad. Eventually, we went through the State Department to reach the heads of our various sites and told them to be super careful.

There’s a way in which living in another culture helps students learn very fundamental things about themselves and their own culture. From a remover, from being in Italy and putting themselves in a culture who come from a different way of life than we do?

There’s a way in which living in another culture helps students learn very fundamental things about themselves and their own culture. From a remover, from being in Italy and putting themselves in a culture they are not so familiar with. They begin to see more clearly the things they have to deal with, they begin to see more clearly the things they have to deal with, they begin to see more clearly the things they have to deal with.

ENGEL TOCKANN: The philosophy stems from an intuitive belief that we benefit from not only reading about but experiencing and understanding another culture—cultivate through living it. What is that benefit, besides the obvious one of being aware and hopefully more sympathetic to people who come from a different way of life than we do?

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PETER LENNIE: As a remover, as someone who was born overseas, in Tehran, to a very international family, I understand with, they begin to see more clearly the things they have to deal with, they begin to see more clearly the things they have to deal with.

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“Network” implies something much more sophisticated. It implies horizontal and vertical forms of integration, movement in multiple directions. It implies not just students’ study experience, but integration of faculty, movement of faculty. Because being in the next stage is to develop the movement of ideas, the movement of faculty. Because being in the same spot for collaborating is very important.

We talked about ourselves as a global university. Everybody wants to be here. They’re certainly attracted to the concept of being in New York. We'd be a good university. Maybe even a very good university. But if we wanted to be a leading university, we had to change.

I believe that cosmopolitanism is not an analytical category that fits into political theory or any other theory. Rather, it is a form of experience. And it is a self-defining experience. That is, you must be changed by the experience of difference. Not only learn about difference, but then ask critical questions of yourself as a result.

Why does it matter to a student? To be successful, however you define success in this new world, whether it's personal satisfaction or the ability to make a difference in the increasingly complicated world we're living in now, one needs to be culturally competent and culturally sophisticated. It implies not just students’ studying abroad but that many students remain enclosed within a kind of bubble. It is very hard to have a cosmopolitan experience, given the American propensity to not learn foreign languages.

We have an image of moving from place to place. But I think you go to a place and become part of that place for a while. As fully as you can. As fully as you can.

TONY JOHNSON: It's no secret that I'm of African-Caribbean heritage. When you use the word global, I immediately roll my eyes. On the other hand, I am actually very much in favor of exactly what people mean if they're serious about global education, a sense that it's no longer possible to think of being educated as simply being raised in and knowing only the language, the culture, the history of your country.

It's obviously true if you're Dutch or Danish, but it's just as true now if you're American.

The key word is network. That's how people are doing it now. It's a self-reflexive experience. That is, you're not only changed by it, but you're also asking critical questions of yourself as a result. If you're not really changed or if you're only superficially changed—because you now have more information—then I wouldn't consider that a cosmopolitan experience.

When Michael Steinhardt and I met for the first time, before I became the dean of the Steinhardt School, I asked him what he wanted of our students at the undergraduate level and primarily at the graduate level. What would he want them to be equipped with? One of the real challenges of education abroad is that students still remain enclosed within a kind of bubble. It is very hard to have a cosmopolitan experience, given the American propensity to not learn foreign languages. We have an image of moving from place to place. But I think you go to a place and become part of that place for a while. As fully as you can.

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ANG LEE: Sometimes I feel like I'm at a vantage point. Some days I feel like I'm in limbo. But that's our world. It is definitely getting smaller, more convenient. It's easier to reach out.

For my first movie I was here in New York, in Riverdale. I came here to do postproduction. My next movie I'm going to be in Taiwan, India, Shanghai, and another part in Buenos Aires. We have an image of moving from place to place. But I think you go to a place and become part of that place for a while. As fully as you can.

BILL BERKLEY: If I were recruiting a faculty member, as MATTHEW SANTIROCCO: I've often said, When you don't have any laurels to rest on, you don't have anything to protect. You can only go forward. I think people are very attracted to the opportunity to innovate.

That's how people are doing it now.

Carol Manguel, Dean of NYU Libraries since 1999

DAVE McLoughlin: Another aspect of our international program that is complementary to our students’ studying abroad is that so many of our students themselves come from abroad, at the undergraduate level and primarily at the graduate level. Those students completely change the complexion of our local campus.

Mary Bradock: Students at the Steinhardt School come from all over the country and the world. And they come knowing that this is not a school like every other school. We don't all wear the same colored T-shirts. We’re united by the arts more than by sports. We’re a school that attracts students who thrive on the energy in this fabulous city. They want to bring their energy to New York and to the global society they are about to enter.

This is a student body that is looking for more—more culture, more art, more engagement. They want to go to one more theater event, one more place to listen to some of the great minds talking with them about the biggest and most pressing problems of the world.

When Michael Steinhardt and I met for the first time, before I became the dean of the Steinhardt School, I asked him what he wanted of his school. Of course he said quality. Of course he said relevance to the real world. But he said one other interesting thing. He wanted the Steinhardt School to be on the edge of where things are beginning to happen.

Ellen Shalala: The Wagner School tracked the University in terms of local to national to global. In addition to having about 30 percent of our students specialize in international development, we’ve recently decided that all of our students need to have a global perspective by the time they graduate. It turns out that about half of Wagner students lived in another country before they came and about half of them speak two languages. Our commitment, both at the curricular and extracurricular level, was to give people the tools to think about the forces that shape whatever issue they care about, whether it’s housing or health or education or the environment. To make sure they know how to look for best practices and innovation, not just in other American cities but across the globe, and to be able to work across multiple cultures.

Wagner’s really trying to figure out how to be a global school of public service.

Mary Bradock: Students at the Steinhardt School come from all over the country and the world.

Tony Johnson: It's no secret that I'm of African-Caribbean heritage. When you use the word global, I immediately roll my eyes. On the other hand, I am actually very much in favor of exactly what people mean if they're serious about global education, a sense that it's no longer possible to think of being educated as simply being raised in and knowing only the language, the culture, the history of your country.

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For my first movie I was here in New York, in Riverdale. I came here to do postproduction. My next movie I'm going to be in Taiwan, India, with the music probably being in London. My visual effects crew could be in New Zealand. That's how people are doing it now.
I see the NYU Abu Dhabi campus as the natural evolution of all that NYU is doing.

Before, we had the hub-and-spoke model, with students based in New York, then going out to these sites. But they would all come back to New York. The creation of NYU Abu Dhabi was a significant step beyond the study away site, because NYU Abu Dhabi would recruit students of its own and grant a degree of its own. With Abu Dhabi, we began to see a new model developing. That was the first step in shifting to the network paradigm.

We have perhaps the most distinguished program in the country on the Middle East. In the time between Jay’s last year and when John was coming on board, we knew we needed to have some presence in that region.

In about 2005, you looked at the picture of NYU’s sites and global presence, and clearly absent was the Arab and Muslim world. We asked ourselves, “Can you be the ecumenical university we want to be and not be in that world?” The answer was clearly: You could not. The second question was, “Is it possible to be in the Arab and Muslim world? Is there any partner to do it?” That’s how the Abu Dhabi project grew.
In Abu Dhabi, with all the issues that were on the table—academic freedom and workers’ rights, issues around safety in the Emirates—we began to work with the highest levels, specifically the Crown Prince and his senior staff, to brainstorm about what this institution might look like.

That led to an initial meeting with a delegation of us, but really it was John’s opportunity to spend some time with the Crown Prince. It was probably the most amazing meeting I’ve ever attended in my decades at NYU.

John Sexton met HH Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed at a majlis—an audience that takes place in a special hall where anyone who has reserved in advance can speak with the Crown Prince. The room held scores of people, but the conversation took place off to the side, privately.

John Sexton: It was suggested—impossible as this might be to understand—that this kid from the streets of Brooklyn and the grandson and son of Bedouin leaders would really take to each other. We were told that if we could get to Abu Dhabi and go to the majlis, a convening of the court where any citizen can come and bring to the Crown Prince a suggestion or an issue, we would have 15 minutes at 6 pm on Sunday.

As we’re going there, they say to me, “Now, listen. No hugs. This is a formal setting. You’re going to walk into this room and don’t even shake hands unless the Crown Prince offers you his hand.”

So we walked into a fairly large room, and around the perimeter of the room are sheiks in their traditional white garb. No one in the center of the room. The Crown Prince got up from across the room and walked toward me. We met in the middle, and he put out his hand. We shook hands. He led me over, we sat down on a couch, and we began to talk.

John Sexton: I proposed the idea for a study away site.

Then he said to me, “I know of your writing about a world of idea capitals. I want Abu Dhabi to be the idea capital in this region of the world. And I don’t think a study away site would do that. Is there a way to think bigger about what we do here? Is there a way to think of having a full presence of NYU here? I would give you the dream of creating the ideal research university from scratch. How would you do it if you could do it from the beginning?”

We began to speak of its being not simply a study away site but a comprehensive campus, as New York is a comprehensive campus.

John Sexton: I said, “I think it would be possible. It never has been done. It would be hard. But if we were good partners to each other, it could happen.”

So he said, “What is your greatest fear about it?”

And I said, “Well, my greatest fear is that either you or I will compromise excellence.”

He said, “Well, I won’t disappoint you if you don’t disappoint me.”

John Sexton: There was a lot at stake, anxieties and hopes on both sides. Everyone there, those of us from NYU and those from the Emir- ates, was observing this conversation between John and the Crown Prince, and of course nobody could hear it. But if you were a reasonably good judge of body language, you could tell that they were connecting—John bin Zayed and HH Crown Prince.

John Sexton: I put out my hand to shake his hand.

He looked at me and he said, “Where is my hug?”

To the shock of everyone there—because they all thought I initiated it—we hugged.

Hilary Ballon: They chose NYU because there was a perfect match between the enormous ambition of the emirate of Abu Dhabi to advance itself through education and the ambition of NYU and John Sexton to make a game-changing move.

The creation of the global network was that move.

John Sexton: We walked out to the car together at the end of the meeting, and I put out my hand to shake his hand.

He looked at me and he said, “Where is my hug?”

To the shock of everyone there—because they all thought I initiated it—we hugged.

BoB BernE: There has been a lot of negotiation since then. But there really are times when you can say, “This was the moment.”
John had come to me in February 2007, very soon after his wife, Lisa, died. [In January, Lisa Goldberg had died suddenly, at 54, of a brain aneurysm.] He said, “I want you to help think about it, to be involved.” NYU Abu Dhabi was clearly something John would pour himself into. And he did so incredibly impressively in response to that great loss. But I needed a sounding board, someone who could integrate the curriculum and develop the physical plant. So I told John that the first thing I wanted to do, which would be a good thing for the University even if we never signed an agreement with Abu Dhabi, was to recruit Hilary Ballon.

I knew Hilary well, as the chair of the only program that really competes with the Institute of Fine Arts, Columbia’s program in art and archaeology. Hilary is an architectural historian who had done significant planning work in the real world, both for the campus and in her various scholarly and civic enterprises. In this digital era, you have to remember that universities are also physical places where people gather. When you think of your own education, you tend to remember the buildings you were in, where you had conversations. I knew that Hilary could be a very good partner in translating the vision into a physical place.

Mariët Westermann: The Crown Prince had to drive it. His vision was this: Our young people certainly want for nothing when it comes to food and housing and the ability to travel. Health care is nationally mandated. Then why, when they want an opportunity to study, to engage in sports in a serious way, to have access to top-quality surgery, do they have to go abroad? Shouldn’t we be thinking about a time beyond oil when we won’t automatically be able to pay for this? Should we not be diversifying our economy, while at the same time developing our young generation in a way that they can drive that economy?

The Crown Prince understood, as a graduate of Sandhurst, that it takes a really strong educational system, that you do need leadership universities, quite apart from workforce development institutions such as higher colleges of technology, which have done a very good job in Abu Dhabi.

Hilary ballon: When I was born, the objectives for my country were to provide a seat for every student in a high school or a primary school. And when I was in high school, the focus became to provide undergraduate education and support good students in their studies abroad.

When I came back and then started working, and now, as a servant of the government, the target is far reaching—to provide the highest quality education for our children and our students.

Mariët Westermann: I had to open in three years. That gave me an absolute stomachache. Hilary Ballon: It all had to happen simultaneously.

In September 2007, Hilary Ballon was appointed deputy vice chancellor for NYU Abu Dhabi. The following month, Mariët Westermann was named vice chancellor.
CONVERSATIONS WITH ABU DHABI

The agreement between the two parties was signed in November 2007, after months of discussions and consultations to make sure that our understandings and theirs were in sound alignment. Because whenever you’re entering into something that is unprecedented, it’s important that you try to spell out as much as you can in advance, so that there are clear expectations and no surprises.

HILARY BALLON: It was very moving when the Crown Prince told the small group that had gathered for this occasion in the formal reception room in his palace about his father’s commitment to education—that he understood that his country would advance through education. For me, it was a goose-bump moment.

“LOTS OF CONVERSATIONS” RESISTANCE AND RECEP TIVITY AT THE SQUARE FALL 2007

HILARY BALLON: In the beginning, there was, understandably, a huge amount of skepticism. Why Abu Dhabi? Wouldn’t it drain resources from the Square? Wouldn’t it drain the attention of the leadership from New York? New York is the heart and soul of NYU.

And there were concerns about academic freedom.

JOHN Sexton: A confidential faculty committee, chaired by Sylvain Cappell, who at the time was chair of the Faculty Senators Council, identified the key issues and, after receiving assurances, endorsed our moving forward.

MARIËT WESTERMANN: Yaw was charged with gathering small affinity groups, the way he had done for other sites, so that at least some of the trip wires could be identified among the faculty, students, and trustees—to get a conversation going.

Then this mad ride began. In September 2007, John told me over Labor Day weekend, “I’ve got the agreement, so get ready.” I can’t say it was smooth or streamlined. But it was the most exciting academic building project I will ever have been involved in.

Once we went public, the first item of business was that many members of the faculty had all these questions about academic freedom, labor conditions of those building the campus, the funding of this enterprise long-term, whether we were being led by Abu Dhabi’s funds rather than any sort of mission for a global network university.

So the effort began with having lots of conversations. I must have had 12 meetings a day, and Hillary the same—conversation upon conversation with people who knew something about the Muslim and Arab world.

Many of those conversations were not very positive. People were expressing doubt about NYU’s motivation. Was it just a great resource grab? Also, in the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, like many such departments all over America and the world, there are real divisions between those who work on ancient and historical Islamic topics and those who work on the contemporary Middle East, who had worries about dictatorship, about Islamism.

We made mistakes, to be sure. And we learned.

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KHALDOON KALIBARAN: Both Abu Dhabi and NYU were looking for something—and selected each other. We had an alignment from the beginning.

Every single one of us believes we’re doing something that’s going to make a difference.
In our first year, we formed a faculty committee that created the general architecture of the program. Would there be a core curriculum? What would the majors be? Would there be a senior thesis or capstone project?

In those early days, John Sexton was involved in all of those conversations. His passion for the project was evident every day.

We had to think not just about the faculty strengths in New York, which we wanted to be able to represent and take advantage of in Abu Dhabi. We also had to think about whether those disciplines retained an urgency in the 21st century and a relevance in Abu Dhabi. And so we developed our multidisciplinary focus in ways that could draw on regional resources. For example, we developed a program on the environment, since Abu Dhabi has made very significant investments in renewable energy, thinking about how to be sustainable in a post-oil economy.

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FACULTY: THE CHALLENGES

HILARY BALLON: A founding principle of NYU Abu Dhabi was that it was not an autonomous entity but part of NYU. The phrase John used over and over again, which hopefully seeped into the consciousness of everyone involved, was, “We need to build an organic connection.”

So faculty composition was key to that structural connection between New York and Abu Dhabi. Part of the faculty would be new faculty—the group we call the standing faculty, because they’re a standing presence in Abu Dhabi. But also and forever we would have New York-based faculty who would go to teach in Abu Dhabi.

We didn’t know what to expect at all. It was not an obvious job for candidates. We had a place where there was no there there yet. We didn’t own buildings, let alone students or colleagues. It was quite a forbidding challenge.

JESS BERNARD: But there were skeptics. When John tried to introduce the idea that he wanted to build a research university in Abu Dhabi, my first reaction was to go to him and say, “Are you crazy? It can’t be done.”

I grew up in Turkey. In elementary school, it was inconceivable for my teachers to ask me, “What do you think?” Our attitude was, “What do you mean? You’re the teacher.”

Then I got converted. At some point, when we were going from one department to the other to explain, I became an advocate. The most compelling reason was, “Because they want us to help them change something in their country.”

Many wrote back to me and said, “This was what convinced me.”

HATS OFF TO THE FACULTY WHO SIGNED ON IN THE BEGINNING, SMITTEN WITH A VISION AND THE OPPORTUNITY WE PRESENTED THAT WAS VERY COMPELLING AND CONTINUES TO BE, TO BE PART OF SOMETHING NEW, TO SHAPE, TO BUILD.

We were looking for people who had that adventurous gene, who didn’t need or want to follow the trodden path.
MARIËT WESTERMANN: By this time, I was traveling at least a week a month to Abu Dhabi. We figured that even though we weren’t opening for three years, we should begin to show some activity on the ground. Hillary and I worked out the idea of creating what we ended up calling the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute, a vehicle for faculty from NYU to come to Abu Dhabi, give talks, and host workshops and seminars with local faculty whom we’d begun to get to know in our travels.

YAW NYARKO: Think of the institute as the research arm of the NYU Abu Dhabi campus.

MARIËT WESTERMANN: Faculty could learn something about Abu Dhabi by being there. They and their colleagues here thought they could never utter the word “homosexuality.” Or the word “Israel.” They would realize it was not true.

At the same time, we would begin to show the Crown Prince’s advisors and the people charged with overseeing the project with us the value of having a university as an intellectual entity.

So the institute could become a wonderful two-way lens.

In April 2008, John came to me with a proposition. A few months earlier, His Highness had asked NYU to create a program that would enrich the lives of students enrolled in UAE universities who would not be attending NYU Abu Dhabi. This idea became the Sheikh Mohamed Scholars Program.

The first class met on September 14, 2008. John was more excited and more nervous than I’d ever seen him because it was the first time he had taught in that country. It was a smashing success—once they could understand his Brooklyn accent. He taught a course, and still teaches it, on the relationship between government and religion. He uses unedited Supreme Court decisions as a means of educating the students on the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses of the First Amendment.

It’s a very eye-opening class. Students learn about critical thinking, how to debate a point, how to support their views with arguments and evidence. They learn how to rebut other people’s arguments they feel are insufficiently supported. They first encounter the newness of being in a mixed-gender class. They’re being taught by very Western methods that involve this engagement—debate, active student participation, faculty asking them for their views. It’s been quite an education.

In September 2008, John Sexton taught the course “The Relationship of Government and Religion” to the Sheikh Mohamed Scholars at NYU Abu Dhabi. For 16 class meetings over the academic year, he would fly from New York City on Friday evening to arrive in Abu Dhabi on Saturday, teach on Sunday, and return to New York City on Monday morning. He continues to teach the seminar to the Sheikh Mohamed Scholars and, since 2010, has taught a seminar to NYU Abu Dhabi undergraduates also titled “The Relationship of Government and Religion.”
POST OFFICE OR FISH MARKET?
The Downtown Campus

HILARY BALLON: It was going to take quite a while to construct the bigger campus. Having announced that this university would be built, it seemed important to launch it sooner rather than later.

MARIËT WESTERMANN: I knew that the campus had to be attractive, even if it was temporary. I wanted an NYU-type entity downtown.

HILARY BALLON: We were shown two sites in Abu Dhabi. One was an abandoned post office. The other was the site of the old fish market. I still can remember vividly visiting both sites with John. The fish market site was completely surrounded by Abu Dhabi towers from the 1980s and ‘90s.

When we got to that site, John said, “This is in and of the city. This is it.”

It was very small, nothing compared to the beautiful, fully developed campuses we were going to compete with for students. We were going after students who were turning down Harvard and Princeton and Amherst and Williams and Oxbridge—and the splendid environments those universities offer.

But the magic of the fish market campus was that it’s so intimate. There’s a spirit about the place fostered by the faculty, students, and administration, everyone knowing everyone by first name.

NYU Abu Dhabi’s Downtown Campus opened its doors in December 2009. The first class of students would begin in September 2010.

TOWARD SAADIYAT ISLAND

HILARY BALLON: Saadiyat is a natural sand island in Abu Dhabi, in the Persian Gulf. We were not originally going to be located there. But the island was the prestige project of the Emirate, with plans to build a branch of the Guggenheim and the Louvre.

To signal the commitment at the highest level of the government to this university, the decision was made to build on Saadiyat Island.

Then we had a search for an architect to do the master plan for the campus. A team of folks from New York with a team of people from Abu Dhabi interviewed five firms in Abu Dhabi, the outcome of which was the selection of Rafael Viñoly Architects to do the plan.

There isn’t going to be a sector for classrooms, a sector for student residences, and then a sector for faculty. The urban concept of mixed-use buildings: That’s what our campus will be.

AL BLOOM: When you start looking at the architecture planned for the Louvre, the Guggenheim, the Zayed National Museum, or the performing arts center, and you see their placement at the end of the harbor, I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say that this will be a 21st-century acropolis.
LINDA MILLS: It’s 2019, and we’re asking the question, “Can we really build the momentum for the most outstanding students in the world to come to NYU in Abu Dhabi?”

One of the people who ratified this idea from the beginning was Alan Goodman, president of the Institute of International Education, the IIE. They oversee the Fulbright program and much more. They were invited to talk about how would we oversee the Institute of International Education, the IIE.

AL BLOOM: We’ve given talks from Shanghai to Buenos Aires, from Prague to Nigeria and Ghana, from Jordan to New York to Seattle, and spoken about the importance of liberal arts education, we’ve always warned that people might see it as dilettantish rather than serious, in the sense that a professional education seems very serious.

The reaction has been exactly opposite. Counselors, principals, students embraced the sense that liberal arts education is the necessary wave of the future.

LINDA MILLS: The Institute of International Education was crucially useful in being able to reach out to counselors, identify the key opinion makers, and bring them to the table for meetings. Al and I had to convince the counselors that this was a good idea, so that they would nominate their best students.

BON ROBIN: The concept is very clear. No matter what you aspire to do when you grow up, you have to have two significant attributes. You have to have a broad education. A curious engineer is much better than a monofocal engineer. And a curious scientist, who knows poetry, who has an understanding of history, who has seen the world through the eyes of an artist, will be a much better scientist than one who’s spent her years just doing biology.

The second point is leadership. We go through a very rigorous selection process when we bring the finalists to Abu Dhabi. We look at people’s intellectual capacities, but we also look at them as people.

During Candidate Weekend, groups of prospective students take sample classes, engage in one-on-one discussions with NYU Abu Dhabi leadership and faculty, explore Abu Dhabi, and experience life in NYU Abu Dhabi’s global community.

HILARY BALLON: The applicants invited for our Candidate Weekends are, in effect, short-listed. They look highly admirable on paper, but we want the opportunity to see them close up. And we want them to have the opportunity to look at us close up because we don’t want any buyer’s remorse. We want our students, once they’re there, to be happy. Abu Dhabi is not for everyone.

LINDA MILLS: I start all the Candidate Weekends by asking them to bring an object that represents home. What I use as an example are my diamond earrings, which were smuggled out of Austria by my grandmother during the Holocaust.

That sets the tone for the serious, thoughtful, but also paradoxical experience of the weekend. What’s this Jewish woman doing standing in front of us? We’re in Abu Dhabi. It establishes the complexity from the beginning.

HILARY BALLON: The weekends are what make the idea of NYU Abu Dhabi click in a way that nothing else we say does. Each group, 60 to 90 students, comes from almost as many countries and from every section of those countries’ societies. They come from major urban areas and remote villages; many board a plane for the first time when they come to Candidate Weekends. The candidates realize what it would be like to be in a classroom like the one in round, with all these different perspectives.

As we’ve given talks from Shanghai to Buenos Aires, from Prague to Nigeria and Ghana, from Jordan to New York to Seattle, and spoken about the importance of liberal arts education, we’ve always warned that people might see it as dilettantish rather than serious, in the sense that a professional education seems very serious.

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But there are also obstacles. And you thought it was.

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Dhabi. Because there are a lot of surprises—and

for any American who gets involved in Abu

So there’s a tremendous experience in store

ment partners in Abu Dhabi that our faculty

of those fronts.

we felt there was going to be progress on each

have gone forward if those windshield issues

sive activities under their belts. We wouldn’t

freedom to workers’ rights to access for people

see on the horizon, ranging from academic

remain questions.

LINDA MILLS: It’s clear that there are potential

in the classroom every single day.

you to make sure that students are comfortable so

at NYU Abu Dhabi that facilitates an honest dia-

New York?

This was not an easy project for

These were endless, soul-searching questions

Did they see it? Did we go far enough?

doubt. We had an idea. But did it translate?

With all due respect to my many friends

morphed many times. I’m sure this is not

it is not the same thing as ensuring academic freedom.

And that wisdom of the decision making.

Some of them have been intelligent. So we’ve

Some of the adaptations have been cuckoo.

to make contributions, this is nirvana.

Tony Welters: We have to be competitive. And

being competitive means that you have to be a

New York are spending a significant portion of their academic life

You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that this was not a slam dunk.

It has great potential. It has great downsides in risk. Manageable downside risk, but risk nonetheless. And I think the board members recognize that. It is not something that people just said, “Where do I sign up?”

Some were skeptical. Some saw it as a great op-

portunity. But the most important thing is that collectively we saw it as the right thing to do at the right moment. And, as it turns out together, you’re seeing a certain level of vindication.

Harvey Stedman: NYU is a place that has

I always tell managers, “Talk to me two years

years. Because I think that’s how long it’ll take to demonstrate the value proposition and the wisdom of the decision making.

Harvey Stedman: NYU is a place that has

morphed many times. I’m sure this is not the

last transformation.

With all due respect to my many friends

at NYU in New York, everything we do isn’t
completely intelligent and the only way to do things.

A lot of it is the best we could cook up at the

moment: it’s a horseshoe of 180 degrees.

because I think that how long it’ll take to demonstrate the value proposition and the wisdom of the decision making.

I was always walking a fine line, trust me. But we have demonstrated what we promised.

Ron Robin: This was not an easy project for

coming in as a foreigner to teach in the United

States, you very quickly realize there are some things you have to be sensitive about here.

I’m black, and race is a big issue. What you

things you have to be sensitive about here.

LYNNE BROWN: Before we entered into this en-

Thus, we have had to get an explicit com-

mitment to academic freedom—the freedom of our faculty and students to study and teach

without constraint as to topic or approach. The

campus had to be a safe haven, where differing opinions and perspectives could be expressed

and examined. And where there would be toler-

ance for the broadest range of ideas.

More recently, when I told you that it is not the same thing as a country’s will-

fulness or ability to ensure complete freedom

of political expression in all venues and at all

times. Many countries—scores of countries—do not meet that ideal. That can be a source of

confusion or disappointment, but it is not the

same as ensuring academic freedom.

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things you have to be sensitive about here.

DUNCAN RICE: NYU is about ambition. So the

statement that the president of the institution, who would normally be expected to be half-

dead from stress and overwork, feels so strongly about globalism that he’s willing to push him-

self onto a plane every couple of weeks; feels so

strongly about NYU’s world presence that he’s

willing to take all of the risks that anybody in

the trade knows go along with foreign campu-

se; and feels so passionate about the state of the

Middle East that he wishes to make a difference

in terms of understanding between the United

States and the moderate Arab world: I think

it’s fantastic.

LAUREL BROWER: I think we’ve got the right view of the world, and it’s one that’s not

founded in essentialism. We’re always walking a fine line, trust me. But we have demonstrated what we promised.

Winnie Byrd: I was born and raised in Ghana.

But with that sensitivity you will find that

some of the students will be devout Muslims.

So, too, in the United Arab Emirates. There are

sensitivities there. It’s a Muslim country, and

some of the students will be devout Muslims.

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Linda Mills: It’s clear that there are potential

land mines for everyone, possibilities for colli-

sions in the classroom every single day.

But there are also obstacles. And there remain questions.

John Sexton: Americans are great at ethno-

centrism. It’s one of our primary traits. We

think we’ve got the right view of the world, and

people should just fall in line.

So there’s a tremendous experience in store

for any American who gets involved in Abu

Dhabi. Because there are a lot of surprises—and
PROLOGUE TO SHANGHAI

“The Global Programs at NYU: An Overview”
David M. McLaughlin, Provost, New York University

A Possible Regional Campus in China
Currently, the possibility of NYU regional campuses in Paris is under study, and the pursuit of a regional campus in Abu Dhabi is under way, with the due diligence and feasibility studies quite far along in each case. China presents a natural site for a third regional campus, given its economic development and the international leadership role it is likely to play in this century. Government officials from Shanghai and the neighboring municipalities, as well as leaders in higher education there, have begun inquiries if NYU has interest in setting up a regional campus. It is important to note that these discussions are in their earliest stages.

Beyond this possibility of a site in China, there are no additional regional campuses in discussion or under consideration. Full regional campuses represent very big steps for NYU, with large risks and large advantages…. In the foreseeable future, other than the three possible sites in Abu Dhabi, Paris, and China, no campuses are envisioned….

This working paper has described NYU’s global programs – their scope, current status, mission and goals, successes and challenges. Collectively, they will be the foundation of NYU as a global network university….

— NOVEMBER 1, 2007

Ultimately, a regional campus in Paris was not established, although the study away site in Paris continues to flourish.

JOHN SEXTON: In 2009, the Chinese ambassador to the UN called me to say, “There’s a delegation coming to New York headed by the vice mayor of Shanghai, Shen Xiaoming. You have to meet.” NYU already had a presence in Shanghai. Since 2006, we’d had a successful study away site at East China Normal University (ECNU). In June 2008, several of us had traveled to Shanghai to visit the NYU site and host a discussion on NYU’s global efforts. During that trip, we met with the mayor of Pudong, Shanghai’s financial district, who was aware of our launching NYU Abu Dhabi.

Back in New York, the delegation told me, “Two years ago, we started with a list of 50 universities in the United States. We cut it to five and have spent the last year investigating those five. Now we’ve seen what’s happened with NYU Abu Dhabi—and we’ve chosen NYU as the pilot. We want you to do in Shanghai what you’ve done in NYU Abu Dhabi.”

So began a conversation and negotiations that led to the idea of creating NYU Shanghai, the third comprehensive campus—with Abu Dhabi and Washington Square—in the global network of academic sites we are creating.

On March 27, 2011, John Sexton and Provost David McLaughlin announced an agreement with the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, Pudong Special District, and East China Normal University to create NYU Shanghai, a comprehensive liberal arts campus in China’s financial and commercial capital and the first such university to be established in a major Chinese city.

JOHN SEXTON: The emergence of NYU Shanghai as a portal campus started with the same indispensable foundation: finding the right partners, people who were entrepreneurial, who believed in the value of education and had faith especially in the American liberal arts and science educational tradition, who had seen our successes in their own city and in Abu Dhabi, who shared a vision of global education and recognized how potent it would be to have a gateway to the global network in their city.

The student body will be comprised of 50 percent Chinese and 50 percent international students. We expect that, like Abu Dhabi, NYU Shanghai will attract outstanding students from across China and from all over the world.
The trustees came to me in 2009, because 2012 was my chosen end date. They asked me to extend my tenure until at least 2016, which meant that the search for a new president would have to start in 2014, 2015. In the same conversation, Marty and I agreed that he would go through a transition as board chair a year earlier.

That’s when I realized that we also had to start a rotation in the deans, so that whoever succeeded me would not inherit deans who had been in their positions for so long that they’d want to step down—leaving a new president without continuity—and yet had been in their positions for enough time to have proved themselves.

So we set in motion a process of leadership transition at all levels that allowed for an orderly turnover through a five-, six-year period.

In 2014, nearly three-quarters of NYU’s deans and heads of institutes were new appointments since 2009.
TONY WELTERS: I grew up in a home where neither of my parents graduated from high school. All my siblings did. I’ve seen a level of success I never contemplated. So I’m probably the wrong person to ask, “Is it possible to change the model?” I believe almost anything’s possible if you’re willing to dream great dreams and then execute and be disciplined around the execution.

So when we think about diversity, we have to think about it in all of its components: economic, racial, social, geographic. All of those things must be high priorities. And if any one of them slips through the cracks, we become vulnerable. Because most institutions can’t keep all of those components on the playing field.

BILL BERKLEY: The board is very cognizant of our responsibilities, first and foremost to our students. Along with that, there’s our fiduciary responsibilities to the University. Survival is something people don’t think about when you think of large, established institutions. But it’s always something you worry about when you’re a fiduciary for a place like NYU.

Trustees are not supposed to be educators. That’s what John and all of the professional staff bring. But we’re supposed to understand finance and budgets. We’re supposed to be able to understand balancing all those things.

And to be sure we understand that our role is not to manage, but to help set direction for the institution.

MARTY LIPSON: A large number of the trustees are alumni, but we have also greatly benefited from trustees who are not and who have been very, very supportive, a major factor in the progress of the University.

TONY JUDT: The greatest asset in this country is not the military. Not even the Constitution. It is America’s remarkable higher education system. We have better universities than any other country in the world put together. We have not only the greatest private universities in the world; we have public universities that the rest of the world can’t even imagine. Why would we not want to push that asset, to make our citizens realize that what it means to be American is to be educated—not to be rich?

PETE HAMILL: Gallatin wouldn’t recognize the world we’re living in now, but if he stuck around for a week he’d see the fruits of his optimism all around him. Kids who envision a world in which they do work that’s meaningful, that they love. Who think they can make the world better without bloodshed.

More than ever, we need reason, we need the ability to listen to the other person, to disagree with respect on the basis of what’s known, what the facts are, what the research teaches us, what makes us more human.

LEONARD STERN: The fact that New York University could grow and prosper from its founding and remain true to the founders’ idea that anybody who’s qualified can get in, and that this has gone on generation after generation: it’s really quite fantastic.

When you go to a tree-lined campus, with its busts of the founding fathers—who may be great Civil War heroes or great intellectuals—you have a different threshold of expectation than you do when you go to an urban university whose name may be the name of the city.

If you take all of us who are active in the University, we’ve all been offered trusteeships in other universities as well as in city organizations that carry a black-tie cachet. But we really believe in this nonelitist tradition. Most of us who are self-made or relatively self-made have a real investment in it. It’s almost a competitive drive in us: “You goddamn snobs who were given everything!”

NYU is the largest experiment in urban higher education in this country. And never with an endowment to speak of, never with wealth. Nobody ever gave enough money that we could afford to go out and make mistakes.

How can you be complacent when you have to pay bills? There are many things we have to improve, there are things wrong with us, but complacency is not one of them.

NYU gave me a scholarship when I needed the money. It was very simple. You can’t pay that back.

PETE HAMILL: Gallatin wouldn’t recognize the world we’re living in now, but if he stuck around for a week he’d see the fruits of his optimism all around him. Kids who envision a world in which they do work that’s meaningful, that they love. Who think they can make the world better without bloodshed.

More than ever, we need reason, we need the ability to listen to the other person, to disagree with respect on the basis of what’s known, what the facts are, what the research teaches us, what makes us more human.
PETE HAMILL: My scholarship changed dramatically when I arrived at NYU. I had a project that was going to be an intellectual and cultural history of Hartford, Connecticut. Some key people—Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe and a great theologian, Horace Bushnell—were there. After about six months on the job at NYU, I said, “What are you doing?” Writing about Hartford, and look what you’re in the middle of.

MARY SCHMIDT CAMPBELL: Greenwich Village is a natural place for New York University students. It was always a café culture. It was a place where in the “50s Beat poets, Ginsberg, Coltrane, Charlie Parker would come. An easy mix of people, an easy acceptance of different lifestyles, in racial relationships, homosexuality. It was just a place that was open.

The Village had that experimental laboratories, risk-taking feeling. It has retained that feeling where a young person can come and start out—and that’s important for the University, part of what attracts people to New York City.

PETE HAMILL: You can come here from anywhere in the world, hoping to be a writer or a dancer, or with urban planning firms. We have a lot of students doing internships in city government, as well as in nonprofits in New York, but also at the UN or in major health care organizations or with urban planning firms. This is a natural place for New York University students. It’s part of what attracts people to New York City.

ELLEN SCHMIDT: You can explore any career and multiple careers by being in New York City. Our students are making a choice when they come here, not just to go to college but because we think you’ll probably make your life here.

And our students do, in high proportions. Our students are a making a choice when they come here, not just to go to NYU but to become New Yorkers. They graduate, they stay. Cities that work are cities that attract people from outside who want to make their home there. This is what other cities throughout the country are trying to do—the Atlantas of the world, the burgeoning cities in Texas and in Florida. They are attracting colleges and universities and giving them incentives to set up branch campuses and regional campuses in their cities because they know this is what will attract young people who stay. It’s a conscious strategy.

New York doesn’t have to do that. New York is home to over 100 colleges and universities. We have Boston beat by a mile.

NYU’S “.LOCATIONAL ENDOWMENT”

EMBRACING THE CITY

GREG ALBANIS: We have Boston beat by a mile. But New York, but also at the UN or in major health care organizations or with urban planning firms. This is a natural place for New York University students. It’s part of what attracts people to New York City.

TOM BENDER: Although the student body has become more national and international, my classes are still filled with kids from all kinds of families in New York. As soon as they open their mouths and debate, I have a microcosm of the city.

BILL BERKLEY: We have eight million people here, they’re all different, and they all give us a huge competitive advantage.

MIKE BLOOMBERG: When I first got the job of overseeing Commencement, two deans went to a Dane’s Beads and bought me a sympathy card. Commencement, what a nightmare. You make a mistake, 20,000 people see it. But I can count on one hand the days I never wanted to come to work.

What other students can say they graduated in Washington Square Park or now at Yankee Stadium? We’ve got these great shots of kids eating hot dogs and pretzels while they’re graduating. And then we’re on the subway going home, and just before we get into Manhattan, one of the conductors this year said, “Before we enter Manhattan, this is the conductor I want to congratulate all the NYU graduates.”

The whole line of 30 cars was purple, and everybody went crazy.

That’s an NYU moment. That’s a New York moment. You know that’s not going to happen anywhere else.
NYU’S “ATTITUDBINAL ENDOIMENT”

“AN AFFIRMATIVE LACK OF CONTENTMENT”

TOM BISHOP: This is a place with much more soul than so many others. Where anything can happen. Where people institutionally, administratively, do not take the attitude, “What we’ve done is terrific. Let’s maintain it.” Maintenance is not a word you hear around here.

JOHN SEXTON: One consistent theme in the large history of NYU is what I call an affirmative lack of contentment. I can’t tell you the number of people who’ve been attracted by the fact that they will be taking something that’s already great but making it greater.

TOM FRUSCIANO: The personality of NYU is that everything’s possible. It’s a massive place, but it’s always been able to do what it says it’s going to do, particularly in the last 30 years. That’s my take on the NYU personality. “Can we? We’re going to do it!”

RICH STANLEY: NYU is not stuck up. It’s a very accessible, friendly, inspiring place. Although it has now achieved a level of excellence that puts it in a class with many of the greatest universities in the country, it still has a feeling of the swankiness of New York City.

At NYU, people are living in the real world, and even though they may be great scholars, NYU is not stuck up. It’s a very accessible university, and many of them please to be stuffy.”

JOEY STIMPSON: NYU has far fewer stuffy people. Many of the students I met were saying, “What was that?” “I met so many stuffy people.”

John Sexton: So the dean said, “Well, the policy of Harvard is to invite the most brilliant people in each field and let them do as they please. Many of them to please be stuffy.” NYU had far fewer stuffy people.

RED BURNS: We are all here for the same purpose. We are all here for the wonder of discovering the mystery of not knowing. What makes my work here is that nobody ever thought we could do it. And I didn’t see why we couldn’t.

As David Kirp wrote in 2003, “NYU is the success story in contemporary American higher education.”

NYU has a personality that’s been there from the beginning. It’s scrappy. It has an underdog tone to it, a chip on its shoulder. It came to the brink of disaster, but then picked itself up, came to the brink of disaster again, picked itself up. And that’s what NYU is. It’s just an extraordinary place to be. Every day is like magic.
This oral history concludes in 2010—but NYU, in its vitality and ambition, continues to anticipate and respond to the ceaseless change that is a signature of New York City and the 21st century.

For the first time in human history, most of the world’s population lives in urban areas. In 2010, Mayor Mike Bloomberg launched an applied science initiative to draw engineering and technology talent to New York. In response, NYU assembled a global consortium of universities and international tech companies to focus on urban science. The University’s winning proposal resulted in the Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP). Based in downtown Brooklyn, CUSP was launched in 2012 to harness the power of data informatics in order to understand how urban citizens work, live, and move.

The need for a coordinated approach to cities in relation to their environment was confirmed in that same year by the calamitous impact of Hurricane Sandy on many neighborhoods of New York City—and on the University. At 11 feet above the East River for a storm predicted to crest at eight or nine feet, NYU’s medical complex was considered safe. But the river crested at 14.5 feet, flooding two below-ground levels of the Medical Center, destroying millions of dollars’ worth of MRI scanners, gamma knives, and electrical circuitry, disrupting ongoing research and shutting down the center. Only the emergency preparedness and dedication of the Lanegan staff made it possible to evacuate 300 severely ill patients—at times in the arms of doctors, nurses, and emergency workers in darkened stairwells—with a single injury.

With its hallmark resilience and under the undaunted leadership of Bob Grossman, the center was operative, albeit in temporary quarters, only 60 days later. But it took two years to rebuild. So great was the damage that in July 2014 FEMA awarded the Medical Center $1.13 billion in recovery aid, one of the largest grants to a single project in FEMA history.

There have been other dramas. Despite the University’s intensive efforts in community consultation, NYU’s 2031 plan grew increasingly contentious, resulting in many challenges to its effort to add needed space with minimal strain on the Village’s resources and ambience. In response, NYU modified its plan, which was approved overwhelmingly by the City Council of New York in July 2012. Two years later, a faculty-led internal working group reaffirmed the need for more academic space and recommended that the University proceed with an almost 900,000-square-foot building on the site of the Coles gym. That plan also sparked legal challenges, which continued into 2015.

Some vociferous voices within the University protested the expansion plans at home and abroad. In 2013, there were votes of no confidence in the president’s
leadership in four of NYU’s 18 schools, even as several other faculties, the deans, and the board of trustees reaffirmed their support of the University’s direction.

The graduate student union issue reemerged in late 2013, when NYU agreed voluntarily to recognize and bargain with a union, becoming the first private university in the nation to do so. Finally, in 2015, a new six-year agreement was reached.

Meanwhile, applications to the University continued at a record high—over 60,000 in 2015, double the total 10 years earlier. After the completion of the merger with Poly, the University was accepting engineering applications for the first time in four decades.

In spring 2014, NYU Abu Dhabi held its first graduation. Three of its 140 graduates were selected as Rhodes Scholars at Oxford, with two more Rhodes coming from the graduating class of 2015. The new campus on Saadiyat Island was completed; by the fall of 2015, nearly 900 students will be in attendance, with an entering class whose acceptance rate was 3 percent. NYU Shanghai’s inaugural class began in September 2013. Two years later, there will be over 850 students there. By 2015, there were close to half a million alumni of NYU in almost every country in the world.

The concept and reality of a global network university continued to evolve, with an increasing emphasis on faculty engagement in the study away sites and the Abu Dhabi and Shanghai campuses. In 2014, following media and NGO reports that there were serious gaps in compliance with labor standards set by NYU and its partners on the Saadiyat site, an outside investigation was launched. The report, published in 2015, confirmed that while most of the workers benefited, a significant number were not, in fact, covered. NYU and its partners pledged to compensate these workers and adopt a series of the report’s recommendations going forward.

As he completed his second term as president, John Sexton continued to teach undergraduates, now not only in New York, but in Abu Dhabi and then Shanghai. The search for NYU’s next leader began, as planned, in 2014. In March 2015, the trustees announced that Andrew Hamilton, former provost at Yale and current leader of Oxford University, would succeed Sexton in 2016. Sexton, who will remain on the faculty and teach, will serve the University as president emeritus.
Whatever the roller coaster, NYU has been unwavering in its primary commitment—the education of its students. Since 1831, teaching and learning have been the soul of the University. And so the concluding voice belongs to a student.

Commencement 2011, Yankee Stadium, New York City

Michelle Pomeroy, BA, College of Arts and Science, speaks to her fellow graduates, about to launch themselves into the world:

I remember being ready to head out for an evening horse ride on my family’s Kansas farm when I saw the acceptance letter lying on my kitchen table. Thrilled, I went outside, swung up onto the saddle, and rode down my family’s drive toward a sunset. And I remember repeating to myself over and over, “Everything is about to change.”

Now I realize that few of us share this exact acceptance story, but that is the beauty of NYU. We have come from so many backgrounds and perspectives—all 50 states and over 130 countries—and this beautiful collage of human experience has transformed how we are able to see and understand the world.

I came to NYU to study journalism and religious studies so I could help create cross-cultural dialogue and awareness of religion through the media. Chasing that passion has taken me on a journey to the Himalayas for research in a Tibetan nunnery, to Israel to work alongside Arab women, to India to plan and lead political leadership trainings for refugee women, and to Queens to work alongside a conservative Afghan community.

All of these experiences came about because I was willing to test my passion’s legitimacy—and then had the opportunities through NYU to connect with the world, as it exists in New York and beyond.

We are graduating today having already experienced what so many people term “the real world.” We have been New Yorkers, interns, employees, researchers, world travelers, and we have lived the concept, the vision of what the world can and should be, collaborating as global peers.

So here we are yet again: Everything is about to change. But this time—in so many ways—we are ready!
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LYNNE P. BROWN
Senior Vice President
Project Director
The following quotations are from *My 60 Years at NYU*, by Martin Lipton, published online, 2012:

40 “The solution... a great city.”
46 “There then ensued... agreement.”
97 “Dean Sexton... then and today.”
111 “We worried... our survival.”
127 “This merger... NYU hospital.”
185 “In 2000... Ken Langone.”

The following quotations are from *Adventure on Washington Square: Being President of New York University, 1962-1975*, by James McNaughton Hester, self-published, 1996:

40 “After 13 years... United Nations University.”
49 “As NYU... unimaginable.”

All Larry Tisch direct quotations are from Conversations, Laurence A. Tisch with Bonnie Kozek, private publication, 1999-2001.