

TO: THE NYU COMMUNITY

FROM: John Sexton and David McLaughlin

DATE: August 7, 2007

RE: A Future Together for NYU and Polytechnic University

We want to make you aware of a development: New York University and Polytechnic University – the second oldest private engineering school in the United States, with a rich tradition of excellence among its students, alumni, and faculty -- have resumed discussions, left off three years ago, on a possible merger. We now begin a period of conversation to give shape to that affiliation, but the leadership of our two institutions, as well as members of our Boards of Trustees, are optimistic that an agreement can be reached.

Let us offer some perspective on the resumption of these talks. Throughout its 176-year history, NYU has not been afraid to take bold steps to advance our research mission, to enhance our students' education, to address the rise of new disciplines, or to respond to societal issues. Our present School of Medicine is the result of a merger in the late 19th Century with the Bellevue Hospital Medical College. Recognizing the possibilities of individualized instruction in a research university setting, we established the Gallatin School within our own time here.

NYU also has had to make painful choices. When we sold the Heights Campus to the City University of New York, we disbanded our College of Engineering. Though NYU obviously has thrived in the intervening years in all disciplines including very much the sciences, the absence of a school of engineering and applied science has been felt keenly in a world increasingly reliant on technology.

As the possibility of this merger presented itself, we posed such questions as the following to ourselves: Would it not be a great enhancement to our University if our scholars who are renowned experts in multi-media and the interactions between humans and technology could collaborate with Poly engineers working on media technology? Might not collaborations between NYU health care faculty and Poly faculty offer new advances in biomedical science and engineering? Would it not be advantageous to our students, who prove themselves to be problem-solvers in so many fields, to have ready access to an engineering courses and programs? Wouldn't this location in Brooklyn – so vibrant and so near our own location in Manhattan – be a wonderful neighborhood of which to be a part in the future?

Beyond that, there is an additional symmetry: a number of NYU's engineering faculty went to Poly when the College of Engineering was closed. Though most have retired by now, in some modest way, this agreement would be not only an act of uniting, but also an act of re-uniting.

We share important values with Poly. We are both institutions that are “in and of the city” and that draw their strength from our presence in New York. We are both committed to constant self-improvement and to drive towards excellence. We are both historically committed to serving the strivers, the talented entrepreneurs, the men and women who are the first in their family to go to college, those who see higher education as an opportunity to be seized not a birthright to be passively accepted. We both share a spirit of innovation, and are both interested in seeing our communities concretely engaged with problem-solving in the real world.

The new leadership at Poly has been vital to resuming these conversations, and they will be excellent partners in this important undertaking. I invite you to read the memo from Poly’s president, Jerry Hultin, which can be found on the web here (<http://www.poly.edu/public.affairs/nyu>).

The joining of our two institutions will not be immediate or abrupt; it will be a gradual process. We will keep you informed of developments as we move forward on this exciting path.

We are convinced that the next generation of NYU stewards will look back at this decision from 15 or 20 years hence and recognize it as among the most important for NYU in the first decade of the 21st Century. We are very pleased that NYU and Polytechnic are taking steps down this pathway.