

THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

LEHMAN COLLEGE • THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK • FALL 2005

2005–2006: An Opportunity to Celebrate the Past While Shaping the Future

Dear Students, Colleagues, Alumni and Friends:

The past is prologue, Shakespeare wrote, and it is in that spirit of reflection and anticipation that I begin my sixteenth year as President of Lehman College.

First, in looking out at the larger world beyond our campus, we are all deeply affected by recent events along the Gulf Coast. Four years ago, we had also just begun a new academic year when tragedy struck on 9/11. As New Yorkers, we personally understand the anguish of the many victims of Hurricane Katrina, whose lives were changed so dramatically from one day to the next. To reach out to these victims on behalf of Lehman College, an account has been established to receive donations that will be disbursed to the American Red Cross. To contribute to this effort, bring or mail your check, made out to the "Lehman College Katrina Relief Fund," to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs (Shuster 206).

Contributing to the rebuilding process is very much a part of the Lehman tradition. In 1990, when I assumed this office, Lehman College had established a strong foundation under the leadership of *Dr. Leonard Lief*, the College's founding President. Despite years beset with a municipal fiscal crisis, Lehman had succeeded in building an exceptionally accomplished faculty, notable programs in the arts, sciences and the professions, a continuing commitment to prepare our schools' future educators, and premiere venues for both the fine and performing arts. As the city's financial situation improved, and we began to witness the rebirth of the Bronx, Lehman College became an important partner in that process.

Over the last fifteen years, the College has opened the APEX, the Information Technology Center, a new Speech and Hearing Center and several new or renovated laboratory and research facilities. New undergraduate and graduate programs have been launched, including a Bachelor of Business Administration degree (2003) that has become one of our most popular majors. Faculty members, including *Distinguished Professors Billy Collins and John Corigliano*, among others, have achieved the highest accolades within their fields. Recently hired faculty with the credentials and the desire to carry on that tradition are strongly supported by institutional initiatives to facilitate their research and by new awards recognizing the importance of that research. Lehman students and alumni, likewise, have built a record of accomplishment both academically and in their chosen careers, particularly in the areas of healthcare, technology and teaching.

Beyond the campus, the College has created a network of collaborations strengthening the borough's schools, businesses and communities. Because of the programs and centers based at Lehman College, thousands of Bronx schoolchildren are acquiring the skills they need for academic and lifelong success; hundreds of businesses have opened their doors; and communities are finding the resources needed to help workers and families.

Strategic Plan Will Identify Both Goals and Timetables

This history forms the prologue to what lies ahead. Over the next decade, Lehman can look forward to:



- major campus construction projects, including progress toward a new science building and the creation of a "one-stop" center for student services;
- new technology to provide more web-based services, especially in the academic, enrollment management and student support areas;

- new programs, such as our new graduate degrees in social work and public health, that build on the College's strengths and respond to needs in both the community and the marketplace; and
- growth of the College's endowment to enlarge our capacity to help many more students needing financial assistance to complete their studies.

These are only some of the elements included in the new strategic plan for Lehman College. The plan focuses on six vital goals (which can be found online at www.lehman.edu/lehman/about/plan.html). To date, six Goal Committees, made up of a cross section of faculty, students and staff, are completing their discussions as to how best to pursue and achieve the benchmarks created for each goal. As the committees present their reports, I will review them and provide an update to the campus. The overall plan, of course, is a continuing "work in progress"—a dynamic document reflecting and responding to budgetary and other considerations that will impact the College from year to year.

New Academic Year Will Bring Progress in Key Areas

As we start the '05-'06 academic year, the tight budgetary outlook for both the College and the University will require close monitoring of income and spending. At the same time, Lehman will be able to advance its mission in several important respects. These include:

Beginning the design process for the new science building. This process will include a canvassing of the Lehman community to ascertain specific needs. Work is also underway to prepare other facilities and purchase needed equipment. Psychology faculty are working this semester in a new research area created by renovating the former G.E.D. space in Gillet Hall. In Davis Hall, a research lab is being constructed for the new Chemistry chair while a search for this position is conducted. In the Nursing Department, faculty are preparing for the arrival of an important new piece of equipment, a Human Patient Simulator, which should be operational by the spring.

Growing in new curricular areas. Responding to the needs of teachers and administrators, the Division of Education has worked to develop two new programs, a six-credit Gifted/Talented extension and a new master's degree in Educational Leadership. The two Gifted/Talented graduate courses were offered for the first time this summer, both online and on the campus, and will continue to be offered each semester. They respond to a new State requirement, effective September 2005, which mandates that all those teaching gifted students must acquire this extension to their teaching certificate. Development of the Educational Leadership program is well underway, with the goal of offering the first course in spring 2006.

Continuing to design online courses and programs. Lehman is leading the way within CUNY in developing this new method of delivering instruction. This semester, the College is offering the first two nursing courses in a new program being designed to help registered nurses (R.N.s) earn their bachelor's degrees completely online—and, ultimately, once plans are approved, their master's degrees as well. In other technology advances, this summer the College introduced an online, searchable catalog for both undergraduate and graduate courses and made a seamless transition to a new email system, hosted by Mirapoint.

Opening a Workforce1 Career Center at CUNY on the Concourse. This center will be administered through Lehman and provide comprehensive job placement and training for many hundreds of Bronx residents. Funded by a \$4 million grant from the New York City Department of Small Business Services, it is scheduled to open early this fall. This new venture, modeled after centers already in operation in other boroughs, recognizes the College's pioneering involvement in workforce development and its successful collaborations with unions, businesses and government agencies. In fact, Lehman has been asked by schools and organizations in this country and abroad to lend its expertise in this field.

Installing new traffic-control measures, along with closed-circuit television cameras and emergency-call boxes. Students and faculty returning to the campus this fall were greeted by a welcome sight: an additional traffic signal opposite Gate 6 on Goulden Avenue that will improve safety for both motorists and pedestrians along this busy thoroughfare. This signal, together with the one installed last semester near Carman Hall, should curtail the speed of traffic and provide safer access to faculty and student parking lots. Card readers at Gates 2 and 6 will be installed this year to further help with vehicle control. In addition, a new system of surveillance cameras and blue-light emergency telephones is in the process of being installed and will become fully operational this semester.

Supporting student scholarships. A gala celebration of the leadership and achievements of the last fifteen years, sponsored by the Lehman College Foundation, will be held October 27 at the New York Botanical Garden. All proceeds from this event—part of an ongoing drive to recognize the College's excellence and to enlarge its circle of friends and donors—will provide scholarship assistance to Lehman students. More information will be posted shortly on the Foundation website (www.lehmancollegefoundation.org) and is also available through the Foundation office at ext. 8766.

Convocation and Constitution Day: Two Events in Year-Round Cultural Schedule

Officially, the new academic year will start with the College's Convocation ceremony on September 14 at 11 a.m. in the Lovinger Theatre. This year at Convocation, the College will also honor a good friend and one of the world's leading supporters of the rights of children: *Ambassador Olara Otunnu*, who will deliver the main address and receive an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters. Most recently, Ambassador Otunnu was the United Nations Undersecretary General and Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict. Last year, he spoke with deep conviction at the campus symposium on "The Role of Women in World Peace and The Role of Men and Boys in Gender Equity," and we look forward eagerly to his return visit.

A week later, on September 21, the campus is invited to gather again for the College's first celebration of the newly created Constitution Day. Authorized by Congress, Constitution Day commemorates the signing of that historic document on September 17, 1787, when the 55 representatives to the Constitutional Convention held their final meeting. Since September 17 falls on a weekend this year, schools and colleges across the country will commemorate the event both the week before and the week after. At Lehman, the College community will gather first at 10:15 a.m. in front of Shuster Hall to dedicate the portrait bust of our namesake, *Governor Herbert H. Lehman*. Created by *John Belardo* of the Lehman College Art Department, this striking work was unveiled last fall at a conference on Governor Lehman that was co-sponsored by the College, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum. Last spring the bust graced the Governor's Reception Area of the State Capitol Building. Following this ceremony, one of our faculty's notable legal scholars, *Professor Ira Bloom* of the Political Science Department, will lecture on the Constitution at 11 a.m. in the Lovinger Theatre.

These two events will give the College the opportunity to come together as a community to learn about important issues—and also to become acquainted with some of the new faces on campus, including faculty and administrators. Among the key appointments is *Eva Bornstein*, the new executive director of Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, who comes to the College with almost thirty years of arts management experience in the academic arena. On September 29 at 5 p.m. in Lehman Center, Ms. Bornstein has arranged for a premiere screening of the upcoming nationwide PBS special "Crossing the Bridge of Faith: In Memoriam, Pope John Paul II," which she helped to produce. Broadcast from the Church of Saints Peter and Paul in Krakow, Poland, the concert features performances of Gorecki's *Totus Tuus* and Brahms' *Requiem*, conducted by the "Pope's Maestro," *Sir Gilbert Levine*, who will be present at the screening and answer audience questions.

These events are part of what has become a year-round cultural schedule on campus. This summer saw outdoor concerts sponsored by the Music Department and a variety of film, theatre and musical events sponsored by the Theatre Program and *Lehman Stages*. This cultural schedule took its place alongside two sessions of undergraduate and graduate courses, popular sports camps, and academic and enrichment programs for area high school students and other members of the community.

The pace on campus is accelerating even more with the start of fall classes, the return of faculty and students, and the arrival of hundreds of transfer students as well as new freshmen experiencing college life for the first time. It is a cycle we in academia never tire of repeating because it contains the promise of both institutional and individual renewal.

My years at Lehman College, and I hope yours as well, have been rewarding and fulfilling beyond my expectations. On these 37 acres, we are developing and inspiring the future leaders of our city and our society. It is a mission to which we have committed our professional lives, and there is no purpose more worthwhile, more lasting or more honorable, in this year or any other.

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