

THE TRUSTEES OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
June 2, 2023

Resolution of Appreciation for Lee C. Bollinger

RESOLVED, That we, the Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York, record by this resolution our profound gratitude for Lee C. Bollinger's historic years of service as President. Two decades ago, Lee set out to achieve the impossible: to transform the physical and intellectual footprint of Columbia while retaining the traditions and distinctive academic character of the institution. That he succeeded beyond what anyone could have imagined is a testament to his vision, his persistence, and his daring.

Ishmael, the narrator of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, famously said of his attempt to recount the story of Captain Ahab and the white whale, "To produce a mighty book, you must choose a mighty theme." When Lee became President of Columbia, he chose for his theme nothing less than a full-scale reimagining of what a great urban research university should be in the 21st century. In his inaugural address on October 3, 2002, Lee laid out his plans for the future of what he called "the Quintessential Great Urban University." He reflected on the need to engage more strategically and fulsomely with the world and its problems and announced his plans to expand Columbia's constrained physical infrastructure. He also spoke about strengthening our institutional commitments to diversity, our university traditions, and our relationship with our neighbors in Upper Manhattan.

For Lee, deepening our engagement with the world and its challenges meant redefining how universities viewed their mission and their role in society. He thought that institutions of higher education needed to do more to bring their resources to bear on the problems facing humanity. He believed that this should be a central and unifying commitment that transcended disciplinary and institutional boundaries, and he called it the Fourth Purpose of the University, in addition to teaching, research, and service. His vision for Fourth Purpose work led to the creation of expansive initiatives like Columbia World Projects, charged with building partnerships with governments, organizations, and businesses to translate the University's research and scholarship in concrete solutions for global problems. It also led to the founding of the Columbia Climate School, the first new school at the institution in 25 years, established to strengthen and centralize the university's efforts to address the climate crisis.

Central to this realigning of university priorities and mission was a dramatic, but strategic, increase in Columbia's international outlook and presence. To accomplish that, Lee opened a network of Columbia Global Centers across Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America. These small, flexible spaces offer students and faculty the chance to work and study abroad, connect with local partners on important projects, and inform the teaching, learning, and scholarship back on our home campuses in New York. He launched World Leaders Forum, an event series that has allowed the University community to hear about the critical issues facing other nations, and the world at large, from those in positions of authority and responsibility. More than 300 world leaders, including heads of state, senior government officials, and other internationally

recognized figures from more than 85 countries, have participated in this program since its founding in 2003.

No celebration of Lee C. Bollinger's legacy at Columbia would be complete without a salute to the monumental success that is the Manhattanville campus. In finding a location, developing a master plan, building strong relationships with and gaining essential support from local politicians and community leaders, signing a landmark community benefits agreement, navigating the complicated maze of city approvals, and designing, constructing, and opening the first five buildings, Lee achieved what was almost unthinkable. He brought about a historic expansion of a nearly three-century-old institution in one of the most complex and challenging metropolitan environments on the planet. The stunning, open, and sustainable campus, home to a buzzing hive of intellectual activity, will stand for generations to come as a tribute to Lee and his bold ambitions for the University.

Lee's dramatic rethinking of Columbia, its infrastructure, and its mission has gone hand-in-hand with a deep recommitment to institutional core strengths and traditions. During his tenure, massive investments were made in the arts and sciences and the Core Curriculum. More than 2.8 million square feet of teaching, research, and educational spaces on the Morningside Heights and Medical Center campuses were renovated or expanded. Under his leadership, critical ventures in the arts, brain science, cancer, data science, the humanities, journalism, precision medicine, and many other areas were established. Lee launched and directed the investment of unprecedented sums to the Faculty Diversity Initiative, which supports faculty recruitment, junior and mid-career faculty career success, pipeline programs and more, all with the goal of increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion among faculty. Lee also oversaw two record-breaking capital campaigns, which advanced numerous institutional priorities, including dramatically increasing the affordability of and access to undergraduate education at Columbia College and The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. More recently, he launched a University-wide plan to further expand access and reduce student debt. During his tenure, more than \$13 billion has been raised for the University.

At his core, Lee is a scholar who has devoted his life to the academy. As one of the nation's preeminent First Amendment experts, he has authored or co-edited numerous books on the subject. At Columbia, he has created innovative initiatives devoted to freedom of speech and expression, including Columbia Global Freedom of Expression, the Knight First Amendment Institute, and Columbia Global Reports. He has also served as a member of the Pulitzer Prize Board. These pursuits have flourished alongside his very public profile as a fierce defender of affirmative action. As President of the University of Michigan, Lee led the school's civil rights litigation in *Grutter v. Bollinger*. The decision in that case for the first time upheld the constitutional right of colleges and universities to consider race as a factor in admissions to advance diversity in higher education. Lee's passionate advocacy for cultural, socioeconomic, and racial diversity in American society is longstanding and unwavering. He has spoken out, for decades, against racism and discrimination, and has advocated in favor of providing remedies to address these deep injustices.

And, Lee has been committed to meaningful engagement with members of the University community—he taught his undergraduate course, Freedom of Speech and the Press, every year

of his presidency; regularly hosted informal conversations and “fireside chats” with undergraduate and graduate students alike; engaged frequently with alumni around the world; and, ever the avid runner, jogged through Riverside Park alongside hundreds of community members in his annual 5K Fun Run, which began in 2002.

Lee would be the first to say that this summary of accomplishments over a twenty-one-year period would not have been possible without his wife, Jean, whose vital involvement in and contributions to various initiatives, most notably the Global Centers, mirrors his own. To Jean, we express our deep appreciation.

For all he has done for Columbia, and for all the great work he has yet to do in his next chapter as a professor and President and Trustee Emeritus, the Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York echo Herman Melville in offering this tribute to Lee C. Bollinger, a mighty leader who has produced “a mighty book,” indeed. Thank you, Lee.