

# THE POWER OF STEVENS

## OUR CAMPAIGN. OUR IMPACT.

CAMPAIGN NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS – SPRING 2017



### Dear Alumni and Friends,

I am pleased to report that despite the challenges facing higher education, Stevens has not just weathered the financial turbulence and national decline in applications to colleges, we have, in fact, excelled. Stevens has become a top-choice university with more than 8,400 applications for the 800 spaces in the class matriculating this coming fall.

Our progress is largely the result of three factors: being a premier STEM-oriented university; managing our financial resources with discipline and transparency; and enlisting the philanthropic support of increasing numbers of our alumni and friends.

Disciplined financial management has enabled us to generate reserves that guard against an unforeseen setback, allow us to upgrade our teaching and research facilities, and invest in student-centered programming. By next summer, all fifty of our lecture halls and classrooms will have been modernized and outfitted with the latest instructional technology. After a recent review of our finances, Moody's and Standard & Poor's upgraded our credit rating.

In my experience as a fundraising volunteer over a couple decades, I have found that individuals are much more motivated to give, and give more, when they know their support will have value-added impact rather than simply keep an institution on an even keel. Gifts to *The Power of Stevens* are accelerating the university's progress by supporting scholarships, helping us recruit and retain outstanding faculty, and enabling Stevens to construct new buildings, such as the Gianforte Academic Center, and renovate special facilities such as the Lore-El Center for Women's Leadership. We are growing in both size and quality.

Under the leadership of campaign co-chairs Larry Babbio '66 and Sean Hanlon '80, more than 6,600 individuals and organizations have participated in *The Power of Stevens*. Their support is making an enormous difference and propelling our university to new heights.

Per aspera ad astra,

**John Dearborn '79**

Chair, Board of Trustees Alumni & Development Committee

**ABOVE LEFT:** In March, several generations of Stevens women gathered to celebrate the past, present and future, including renovations this summer to the Lore-El Center for Women.

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Stevens women are passing the torch.

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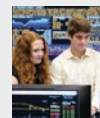
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[power.stevens.edu](http://power.stevens.edu)

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

## HAROLD KRUGER '52



Harold and his wife Anna came to Castle Point often for class reunions.

After their uncle Harold passed away in 2016, Rick De Gironimo and his sister Jean began fulfilling his estate plan, which included a generous bequest to Stevens. The following is an excerpt from a longer story online about Harold's war-time service, career success, and support of his alma mater.

After the war, Harold, like many returning soldiers, wanted to go to college. However, he found few options until Stevens accepted him, on conditions. "No one gave him a chance," Rick said. "They all said he was too old – imagine now, saying 26 was too old for college. They told him he could take remedial classes to prove he belonged, and that's what he did."

Harold did belong at Stevens, even becoming the secretary for Alpha Sigma Phi. After graduating, he worked for several years in Hoboken at Keuffel & Esser, which produced the

classic slide rules once so ubiquitous at Stevens and other engineering centers, but Harold really made his career working as a mechanical engineer for the United States Army at its Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County, New Jersey. He specialized in designing small weapons, including a series of 2.75 millimeter rockets used on attack helicopters. He also wrote a patent for a hand grenade pin.

Upon Harold's death, Rick and Jean became executors of his trust and will, which included a large bequest for the university to use for scholarships. "Harry loved Stevens," Rick said. "He went to many reunions and kept in touch with his classmates for decades. He thought very highly of Stevens and wanted to see other young people get the chance in life that he got. My family and I just want to make sure his wishes are fulfilled."

Read the rest of Harold's story, and others, at [power.stevens.edu](http://power.stevens.edu).

## And the Award Goes to...

Spielberg...Scorsese...and Stevens?

We're excited to report that *The Power of Stevens* [video](#) won an Accolade Award from CASE, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Stevens took gold in the "Video Features: Alumni and Fundraising" category, topping selections from Georgetown and Johns Hopkins.

Stay tuned for the sequel – to celebrate when we hit our campaign goal, of course.



# Stepping Up to the Plate



*Even the most talented students, regardless of background, need a supportive environment.*

At Castle Point, students from diverse backgrounds are getting a step up thanks to STEP, the [Stevens Technical Enrichment Program](#).

STEP started in 1968 as a weekend program tutoring nearby minority and low-income high school students in STEM fields. In fact, it was one of the first programs of its kind in the nation. With administrative and alumni support, the program has evolved into a visible and vibrant part of campus life, helping the university enroll more students from under-represented groups and steering them toward success.

**“Giving back, whether through time, talent or money, allows me to help continue the STEP legacy and ensure minority students have the tools they need for success.”**

Hundreds of Stevens students benefit in some way from STEP. “Being involved in STEP has given me connections, a feeling of belonging, and an appreciation for diversity,” said civil engineering major Gabrielle Mathelier ’17. “I have been able to bring my confidence up. My mentors continue to be here for me, to lead me in the right direction.”

“The STEP program has served as an enormous tool in my academic career at Stevens,” said Christian Rosa ’17, who is graduating with a degree in business and technology and a minor in quantitative finance. “They are my biggest support system on campus and have provided me with the tools to be successful academically and professionally. Their help has been invaluable.”

## A GROWING PROGRAM

The program supports students in three broad areas: academics, notably through peer tutoring; goal-oriented counseling and advising on a variety of issues ranging from student life to job searches; and personal development building skills in communication, presentation, leadership, community service and more.

The program has grown in recent years to include workshops, networking events with alumni, and the Bridge summer program. “One of our newest initiatives is a mock career fair,” said STEP director Deborah Berkley. “It serves a two-fold purpose of bringing alums and our pre-freshmen together, and helping the latter get a jumpstart on one of the practical aspects of career preparation.”

## ALUMNI SUPPORT

Alumni have also supported the program by starting a scholarship for STEP students. “STEP was crucial to my success at Stevens,” said John C. Taylor ’10 M.Eng. ’10, who now works as an associate at Chase. “It’s also the impetus for many minority students coming to Stevens. Giving back, whether through time, talent or money, allows me to help continue the STEP legacy and ensure minority students have the tools they need for success.”



*For her stellar play on the soccer pitch, Whitney Brown has been named Second Team All-Empire 8 and Second Team NSCAA All-East.*

“Receiving the STEP scholarship has allowed me the opportunity to receive an engineering degree from a prestigious engineering school,” said Whitney Brown ’19. “Having the opportunity to be a part of STEP has changed my life, because I have wonderful people and lifelong friends who will always help me, not only in school but in life. I am so grateful to have an amazing support system to develop the confidence I need to achieve my dream to be a successful engineer!”

# Lore-El Leadership

In our previous issue, we mentioned plans to renovate the [Lore-El Center](#), a stately Victorian house that is home to the university's programming for women and a unique residence hall for a small group of undergraduate female students. That work will begin soon, and, thanks to new donor support, Lore-El will also offer enhanced programming for years to come.

The goal of the renovation work is to add 21st century touches while highlighting historic character that has been blurred over time. The result will make the house more suitable for workshops, featured speakers, networking events and more.

"When you walk into the house, you know you're in a special place," said architect Douglas Moss, AIA. (Holzman Moss Bottino Architecture also renovated the Colonial House into the Rueterholz Admissions Center.) "Anything new, like the furniture or the lighting, will be contemporary. At the same time, the envelope, meaning the walls, decorative trim around the windows and doorways, fireplaces, even the inlaid wood floor, which is really beautiful, will all be renovated and restored."



*Astrophysicist Jedidah Isler gave the keynote speech at the 2016 Women's Leadership Conference in October. The 100+ attendees heard her bold advice: "Start with the biggest, baddest, most bodacious dream and don't apologize for it."*

One of the engineers working on the project has a meaningful interest in seeing it succeed. Before becoming a senior associate at Kohler Ronan, Talya Santillan '99 graduated from Stevens with a degree in mechanical engineering. "Being a graduate, it is always a great honor to return to your alma mater and apply your technical skills to enhance the life of others on campus. As a female engineer, it is especially rewarding to be contributing to a project that is improving the quality of life for other females."

Santillan is an example of the progress Stevens aspires to make through programming at Lore-El in inspiring

women to pursue STEM careers. "I'm thrilled Talya is working on this project," said Sara Klein, assistant vice president for Student Affairs. "By using the skills she learned here as a student, she will help other women reach their potential and create a home for all women in the Stevens community." (Two of Talya's colleagues are also Stevens grads, Pearl Odu '04 and Neal Hasrajani '13.)

## ENHANCED PROGRAMS

One of the signature programs the Lore-El Center runs just got a boost from Dianne (Smith) Szipiszky '90 M.Eng. '91 and her husband, Jim '89 M.Eng. '92, with their recent donation towards the annual Women's Leadership Conference, which features a keynote address, an alumnae panel, and a networking reception.



*Paige, Claire '20, Dianne '90 '91, Linda and Maggie Szipiszky enjoy a beautiful fall day on campus.*



*Get the latest news on women's programming at Stevens by following @stevenswomen on Twitter and Instagram and facebook.com/stevenswprograms.*

"Jim and I are delighted to support the Lore-El Center and specifically the Women's Leadership Conference," Dianne said. "With funding for the keynote speaker for the next five years, Dr. Klein and her team can further expand this important event. We hope in the near future sufficient funds can be raised to endow key events like the Women's Leadership Conference, and we encourage other alumni to support the Lore-El Center or the initiative of their choice at Stevens!"

# Pinnacle Philanthropy



*When he was a student, Larry was a member of the Student Council, Honor Board, Tau Beta Pi, Khoda and Delta Tau Delta.*

Having reached the top of his field, Larry Babbio '66 is now eager to see other Stevens students do the same, which is why he just made a big gift to support the empowering [Pinnacle Scholars program](#).

Now in its second year, the program offers Pinnacle Scholars annual stipends for research, entrepreneurship or study abroad, plus access to faculty mentoring, academic conferences, a leadership seminar with President Farvardin, and a “cultural passport” for diverse experiences. Selected as freshmen from a national pool, Pinnacle Scholars have SAT scores 100 points higher than typical Stevens students.

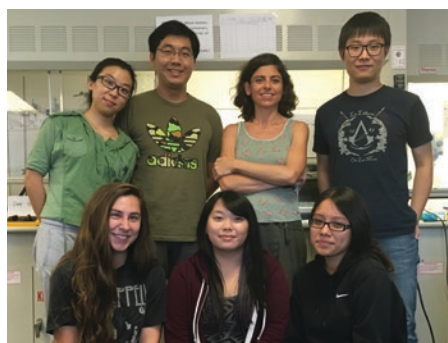
“This is exactly the kind of program Stevens needs to reach the next level as a university,” said Babbio, a retired chairman of Verizon, chairman emeritus of the Board of Trustees, honoree of the Stevens Hall of Achievement, and *The Power of Stevens* co-chair. “These students are special, and I want to encourage their growth.”

There are 109 Pinnacle freshmen this year, following 66 students who started the four-year program last year. “The Pinnacle Scholars program has already offered me great insight,” said chemical engineering major James Potestivo '20. “I have learned many new things through lectures from

brilliant individuals, and I look forward to expanding my knowledge even further.”

“I enjoy the sense of community that the Pinnacle Scholars enjoy within Stevens,” said chemical engineering major Patrick Lyons '20. “I have always had opportunities for advice, assistance, and encouragement from fellow Pinnacle Scholars, as well as from faculty. We have all bonded both in and out of the classroom and expanded our cultural experiences through events in the city and on campus.”

“I am incredibly grateful to be a part of the Pinnacle Scholars program,” said biomedical engineering major Sara Varga '19. “Not only was I given the opportunity to attend a college with the best view, I also got to take my education to the next level with the opportunities Pinnacle has provided.”



*Pinnacle Scholars and chemical engineering majors Kaitlyn Zak (front left) and Mia Walton (front center) studied polymers in Dr. Pinar Akcora's (back, second from right) Soft Materials Lab.*

A scholarship recipient himself, Babbio has endowed his gift, meaning the funds will form a steady stream of support in perpetuity. “Now is the time for us to plan for the future” he said. “We need to grow the university's endowment so that we can continue to provide ambitious opportunities like the Pinnacle Scholars program.”

## CASTLE POINT CONNECTIONS



*Every year, President Farvardin brings news from Castle Point to alumni across the country through the State of Stevens series. Along with his wife Hoveida and Provost Christophe Pierre, he made two stops in Florida in January, including one hosted by Bonita Springs residents Frank '65 and Mary Jane Semcer.*



# Hanlon Lab Happenings



Like its predecessor, Hanlon II gives students an opportunity to learn using advanced Bloomberg data terminals – the same the pros use on Wall Street.

Double the investment, double the impact. Thanks to the continued generosity of Sean '83 and Cathy Hanlon, Stevens now has a second advanced lab to teach high-tech finance to enterprising Stevens students.

Sean and 75 guests toured the new lab, on the first floor of the Babbio Center, during a January gathering of Stevens on the Street, the networking group for alumni interested in finance. President Farvardin and Professor George Calhoun, director of



At IEX, John Schwall has helped give investors fairer options for high-speed trading. "I credit Stevens in a major way for providing me with the foundational educational background to operate in my capacity at IEX."

the [Hanlon Financial Systems Center](#), also attended, and John Schwall '95 MSTM '98, co-founder and COO of stock exchange IEX and subject of the bestselling Michael Lewis book *Flash Boys*, gave the featured talk.

## HIGH-TECH EQUIPMENT

The new lab, known as Hanlon II, features data visualization technologies and the hardware required to analyze enormous data sets, including collaborative touch screens that enable students to interact through smartphones or laptops. The technology also allows guest speakers to contribute to lessons from anywhere in the world.

"In 20 years, finance has gone from a people-oriented business to a high-tech business," Calhoun said. "The engineering mindset at Stevens is valuable to the financial industry — that's why they come here and recruit here."

Seeing the new lab, Sean Hanlon, who runs his own investment management firm, was impressed. "This new lab will improve how students learn,

enhancing both their technology and business skills and better positioning them to manage evolving technologies when they enter the workplace."

## ACTIVE LABS

In his remarks, President Farvardin noted how the labs are growing the finance and business programs, now a tenth of activity at Stevens, allowing the university to have a more visible presence across the Hudson on Wall Street. "These two labs have become a center of intellectual and scholarly activity that bring all of these forces in finance in one place, creating a very unusual opportunity for Stevens."



At Hanlon Investment Management, Sean Hanlon offers an asset management platform that serves over 20,000 individual investors, retirement plans, trusts and institutions.

Sean Hanlon gifted the second lab after hearing how the first, on the Babbio Center fourth floor, is constantly at capacity. In addition to his philanthropy, Hanlon serves his alma mater as a trustee and as co-chair of *The Power of Stevens*. "I've been fortunate enough that, through some financial success, I've been able to help the university, and it's truly unbelievable — this feeling, this pride, this honor to be welcomed here and to be a member of this Stevens community."

More students these days are hoping to emulate Sean's success; in recent years, finance has been among the top three career choices for graduates.

Even students who are already working internships are praising what they are learning in the two labs. “In an increasingly data-driven marketplace, the ability to visualize and analyze multidimensional data is becoming a crucial component for corporate success,” said Dakota Wixom '17, who has worked at Charles Schwab and Mizuho. “The new lab is Stevens’ response to the digitization of the workplace and the democratization of data analysis. Just like an engineer needs a design lab, a data scientist needs the tools and technologies available in the Hanlon labs.”



*Stevens on the Street meets at least once every semester either on campus or in Manhattan, welcoming anyone from Stevens with an interest in finance.*



**Red and Gray days**  
**ALUMNI WEEKEND**  
**JUNE 2-4, 2017**



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## PROGRESS TOWARD GOAL



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## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

### CHRIS CIABATTONE '11 '17



In his spare time, Chris is a lieutenant with the Kingston, NJ volunteer fire department.

*A brother of Delta Tau Delta and recipient of a scholarship, Chris works as a systems engineer for Dell. He is a consistent donor and passionate advocate for Stevens, often encouraging his alumni friends to participate. In May, he'll earn a graduate degree from Stevens in information technology management.*

#### Why do you give back to Stevens?

As an undergraduate, I received the Presidential Scholarship, which afforded me the opportunity to further my education. I give back to Stevens so that my donations will enable other individuals to have that same opportunity. All of the doors opened for me have been opportunities that alumni presented. I am very appreciative of the outreach, depth, and breadth of the alumni networks at Stevens, including the Greek community, all of which have helped put me in the fortunate position I am today.

#### How do you encourage fellow alumni to support Stevens?

Participation comes in many differ-

ent forms, including donations of time, money, effort, and networking. I encourage fellow alumni who have been positively influenced in any way by their experience at Stevens to give back to the community. Giving back to an organization, athletic team, Greek house, or the overall academic community are some small ways to help accelerate the futures of young students at Stevens.

#### What excites you about the future of Stevens?

As a tour guide during my undergraduate years, we highlighted the continuous innovation efforts by our founders and current students and faculty. Then, as an alumnus, I became exposed to the depth of innovation by Stevens that surrounds my daily life. As the world becomes even more technologically dependent at an extremely rapid pace, I am excited to see the role that Stevens will play. I anticipate Stevens leading the charge in innovation in the years to come. Go Ducks!