

# Stevens

WINTER 2020 ISSUE NO. 5

# SOCIETY

## PAGES

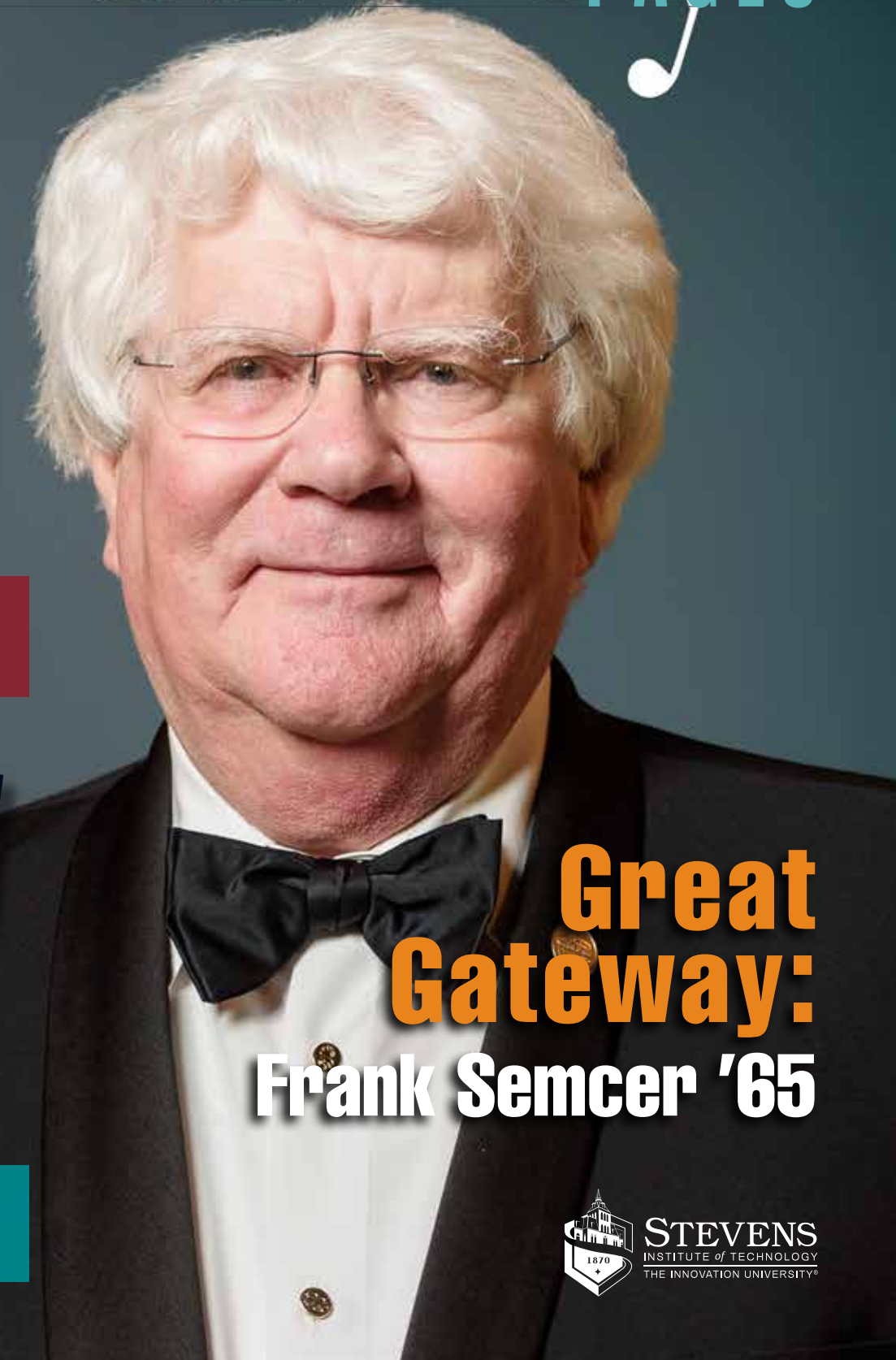
For Members of Giving Societies  
at Stevens Institute of Technology



**Elena Piper '16**  
enters the EAS society



**John McDonnell '72**  
creates a legacy



**Great  
Gateway:**  
**Frank Semcer '65**



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## Letter from Leadership

Society members steer the culture of philanthropy at Stevens.

With their commitment to the four Ls – loyalty, leadership, lifetime giving

and leaving a legacy – society members provide resources for robust scholarships, innovative faculty, stunning new facilities and everything else that propels Stevens to new heights.

Through their generosity, society members deserve credit for driving *The Power of Stevens* campaign. We are optimistic about reaching our goal of \$200 million during celebrations of the university's sesquicentennial, which will begin this coming February and extend through the close of the 2020-21 academic year.

Thank you for being a member of one or more of our four societies. We hope you enjoy reading!

Regards,

**Dawn da Silva**

*Associate Vice President for Development*

*Member, Edwin A. Stevens Society, Stevens Legacy Society*



# Semcers Step Through the Gateway

When he first heard plans for what would become the two-building Gateway Academic Center, trustee **Frank Semcer '65** knew he wanted to be involved. The community celebrated the grand opening of Gateway on December 10.

"I look at these buildings as our gateway to the west," Frank said. "Most of our buildings look east to New York and the Hudson River. Now we have these new buildings with a beautiful walkway to Hoboken. It's a spectacular facility for students to have classes and laboratories."

With his wife Mary Jane, Frank made a three-part gift for Gateway that names the Center for Healthcare Innovation, which conducts research into tissue engineering, drug discovery, biomaterials, prosthetics, telemedicine and other cutting-edge fields.

The first part of the Semcers' gift names a tissue-engineering lab inside Gateway. Frank's company, MICRO, is a global leader in manufacturing precision medical devices.

"New Jersey is a nucleus for the medical device and pharmaceutical industries, and many of our graduates end up in those industries. This spectacular laboratory is a



*Mary Jane and Frank Semcer '65*

wonderful opportunity for our students."

Frank and Mary Jane's gift also supports scholarships and a faculty chair within biomedical engineering. Thus, their gift is exceptional for addressing all three priorities of *The Power of Stevens* campaign: student success, faculty excellence and creating a vibrant campus.

The Semcers are members of all four philanthropic societies at Stevens.



*With a glass skybridge, the Gateway buildings form a new entry to campus.*

***"Mary Jane and I enjoy giving back to anything that will help young students get a better education. Broadening the name recognition of Stevens is also important, and with the Gateway buildings, Stevens is a rising star."***



*The **Gear Society** celebrates alumni who give at any level to Stevens year after year. Through their loyalty, Gear Society members are to Stevens what gears are to machines: they generate power.*



*Named for the university's co-founder, Edwin A. Stevens, the **EAS Society** is the annual gift club for alumni and friends who provide leadership-level support to Stevens. Members wear their lapel pin showing the famed Stevens family locomotive.*



*The six **Lifetime Giving Societies (LGS)** honor alumni and friends whose total lifetime giving to Stevens tops \$100,000, a special group of people who transform Stevens with their generosity. LGS members reach new levels as they increase their giving during their lifetime.*



*Just like Edwin's enduring gift, members of the **Stevens Legacy Society** have planned gifts for the university in their financial or estate plans, ensuring their legacy will have an impact far into the future.*

# A Couch Conversation



*Larry Babbio '66 Hon. D.Eng. '01*



*Patty Torres '01*

At the Celebration of Philanthropy, alumni spanning four decades – **Larry Babbio '66**, **George Serafin '87**, **Patty Torres '01** and **Ashley Greenberg '15** – sat for a “couch conversation” about their Stevens experience and why they support their alma mater.

As guest moderator, Dean of Students **Ken Nilsen** asked the alumni about their first day as students. George, who is a member of the EAS Society, connected his memory to recently dropping off his son, George '23. “My parents had never visited any of the schools when I drove around New Jersey looking for a college,” George '87 said. “My first day moving in was the first time my parents got to see Stevens. I was the first one to go to college, so there was a level of pride and excitement. Of course, it’s surreal now with my son here as a freshman, in the same dorm, same floor as I was.”

Ashley is a member of the Gear and EAS societies with her husband Chase '15. She recalled how she had to pay her own way through school, which has motivated her to give back. “Chase and I decided to support a scholarship for study abroad in the School of Business. I know how important cultural experiences are, and because I couldn’t go abroad, it makes me feel better that we can help other students.”

Patty, a Gear and EAS member, said she began giving back because of her experience in STEP (Stevens Technical Enrichment Program), and she now encourages her friends to support the STEP scholarship. “The first thing I did after I graduated was come back to campus to volunteer for a workshop. I knew a lot of STEP alumni had done the same. They gave me knowledge that prepared me for the professional world, and I wanted to pay that forward.”

Larry recalled how he started in the days when Stevens would warn all the freshmen during commencement about the university’s high failure rate – as the saying went, “look to your right, look to your left, only one of you is going to be here in four years.”

Of course, Stevens is different these days, with graduation rates approaching 90%. Larry, who is a member of all four societies, outlined what he called the lifecycle of great colleges: “You graduate great students, who do great things, who come back and help you get new facilities, great teachers, and scholarships so you can graduate more great students. If we don’t break the cycle, I think our future is bright.”



*Ashley Greenberg '15*



*George Serafin '87 M.S. '92*



▲ The President's Ensemble regaled the audience with two songs



◀ "Bow-tie brothers" Warren Leonard of the Office of Development and Hermes Gonzalez '89 M.S. '95, who serves on the President's Leadership Council

▼ Ben Pramanik M.S. '73 Ph.D. '77 and his wife Nandita, who established a scholarship to honor the late Professor Ajay Bose

# CELEBRATION OF PHILANTHROPY 2019

More than 100 members of the four societies gathered for the annual Celebration of Philanthropy dinner in October, which featured the traditional recognition ceremony for new and rising members. In his rousing closing remarks, President Farvardin recounted all the success on campus and reminded the crowd why they should support Stevens: "We are making the world a better place."

▼ Joe Schneider '46, here with his sister-in-law Nancy Catello, moved into the Kenneth W. DeBaun '49 Society of the Lifetime Giving Societies



◀ Gear and EAS members Joe Carra '68, his wife Jo-Anne, and Rich Cornell '73



▲ George Johnston '72, Dwight Massey '53, Jo-Ann Massey and Maryann Johnston



◀ Frank Roberto '76, his wife Margaret Rose, and Joe Mitro '73 show Stevens pride as members of the Houston regional club



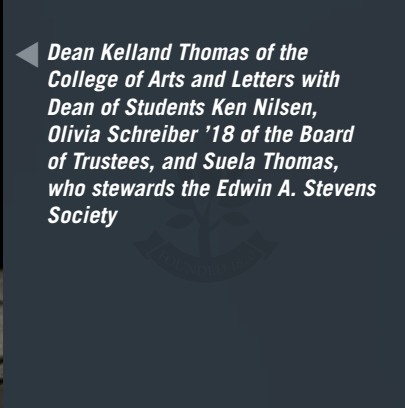


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◀ *Camille and Leo F. Collins '59 M.S. '64 entered the Stevens Legacy Society*

▼ *Carol and Richard Harries '58, who eagerly await completion of the Richard F. Harries Tower as part of the new Student Housing and University Center project*



◀ *Dean Kelland Thomas of the College of Arts and Letters with Dean of Students Ken Nilsen, Olivia Schreiber '18 of the Board of Trustees, and Suela Thomas, who stewards the Edwin A. Stevens Society*



◀ *Here with President Farvardin and Hoveida Farvardin, George Young '76 reached the DeBaun '49 level of the Lifetime Giving Societies*



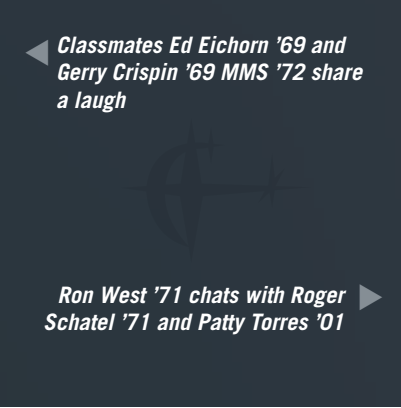
◀ *Larry Babbio '66 Hon. D.Eng. '01 received applause after President Farvardin announced a renaming of the Pinnacle Scholars Program as the Lawrence T. Babbio '66, Jr. Pinnacle Scholars Program*



◀ *Ling-May Lee '81, Steve Lee and Grace Kovenklioglu Ph.D. '78 M.S. '89, a member of the Gear and EAS societies*



◀ *Stevens Alumni Association President Vicky Velasco '04 with Philip Suttmiller and Associate Vice President of Development Dawn da Silva*



◀ *Classmates Ed Eichorn '69 and Gerry Crispin '69 MMS '72 share a laugh*



▶ *Ron West '71 chats with Roger Schatel '71 and Patty Torres '01*





Barbara and John McDonnell '72

# Establishing a Legacy



Looking back on his career in the semiconductor industry, **John McDonnell '72** values the unique education he received at Stevens. "With a unified curriculum," he recalls, "Stevens gave me a solid foundation in engineering and science that enabled me to learn emerging technologies and move across industries better than would have been possible with the traditional specialized programs offered at other prestigious schools. I was required to be self-reliant and responsible for my learning, including seeking out the always-available assistance from instructors when I needed special help. The career center offered best-in-class placement for seniors with leading corporations – much better than available at other colleges."

Now retired, John serves his alma mater through the Stevens Alumni Association. He is an at-large director, chairs the engagement committee, and co-chairs the New Jersey regional club. "In my varied roles, I strive to increase alumni involvement by making engagement more rewarding and by facilitating active, diverse, and healthy clubs, societies, and communities. Inclusion means giving everyone a chance to associate with others with shared interests."

With his wife, Barbara, John recently joined the Stevens Legacy Society.

***"I included Stevens in my will to help grow the university's endowment, which is much too low for a school with our history and aspirations. I only wish I could make the bequest larger!"***

## Society on Staff

Every day, almost 1,000 employees come to Castle Point and devote their talents toward serving Stevens. Some are even members of one of the four philanthropic societies!

### GEAR SOCIETY



**Nicole Malantchouk '12 M.S. '18**  
Assistant Director of Outreach and Professional Advancement, School of Business  
*"I am a proud member of the Gear Society because as an alumna, and now an employee of Stevens, I know our contributions have a direct impact on creating a more meaningful student experience."*



**Zef Ferreira '00**  
Senior Director of Operations and Development Services  
*"I feel proud seeing all the wonderful things happening on campus, and I'm compelled to support a place I call home."*

### STEVENS LEGACY SOCIETY



**Warren Leonard**  
Senior Major Gift Officer  
*"As someone who represents Stevens to alumni, it's especially important to have the university as part of my own philanthropic plans. I'm a proud member of the Stevens Legacy Society!"*

### EDWIN A. STEVENS SOCIETY



**Russ Rogers**  
Athletic Director  
*"Everyone I work with takes our role and responsibility seriously. It's about our students and helping them grow and preparing them for their futures."*



**Linda Vollkommer-Lynch Hon. M.Eng. '04**  
Associate Professor and Head Coach, Women's Fencing  
*"I support Stevens because of their pursuit of excellence in all that they do, as reflected in their academics, career placement, sports and extracurricular activities."*



**Sarah Wells**  
Director of Major Gifts  
*"I joined the EAS Society because I was inspired by our exceptional students and faculty to support the work they're doing to make the world a better place."*

## SOCIETY PAGES

# Q&A

Having graduated from the School of Business, **Elena Piper '16** now works in the finance industry, and she's already started a tradition of giving back to her alma mater as a member of the Edwin A. Stevens Society.



### How did Stevens prepare you to begin your career?

*My time in the Stevens School of Business provided me with the skills needed to excel in the finance industry. The curriculum helped me form a strong foundation by concentrating on the key elements of a solid finance education, in addition to focusing on innovation and key industry trends such as big data, high frequency trading and the use of computer programming to perform optimizations. The curriculum proved to be challenging but prepared me to quickly master complex topics.*

### What motivates you to give back to Stevens?

*Outside of the School of Business, I was involved with several extracurricular activities. As a student-athlete and member of several student organizations, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Stevens. I made lifelong friendships as a member of the women's swimming team and was involved with the Honor Board and Gear & Triangle, where I felt I was able to make a difference. I am motivated to support this community because I want to continue to see Stevens excel and see other students enjoy their time, whether through athletics, campus organizations or other activities.*

### What is something you look forward to about the future of Stevens?

*As I hear about success at Stevens through newsletters, announcements and events, I am proud to be a graduate of the Stevens School of Business. New research and accreditation have elevated the program to a standard even higher than when I attended, and I am excited to see what the future holds for our university.*



## Roaring into the Twenties

The original roaring twenties were all about getting into the party. Before 2020 kicks off, remember to renew your membership in the Gear and EAS societies by visiting [stevens.edu/makeagift](https://stevens.edu/makeagift)

Being a part of these Stevens societies is like having the password to the hottest speakeasy in town, and all that jazz!

## Thank you for being a member of the Stevens societies!

If you ever have any questions about renewing your annual membership or joining a new society, please contact your devoted society stewards:

**Gear:** Matt Gwin  
matthew.gwin@stevens.edu  
201-216-3346

**EAS:** Suela Thomas  
suela.thomas@stevens.edu  
201-216-8294

**Lifetime:** Gillian Brannan  
gillian.brannan@stevens.edu  
201-216-5243

**Legacy:** Michael Governor  
michael.governor@stevens.edu  
201-216-8967

**Thanks for reading, and stay tuned for the next issue of the Stevens Society Pages!**



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CASTLE POINT ON HUDSON  
HOBOKEN, NJ 07030

# See your society friends at these upcoming events!



**FOUNDER'S DAY  
SOIREE**  
*Samuel C. Williams  
Library*



**SCHOLARSHIP  
LUNCHEON**  
*Bissinger Room*



**STEVENS AWARDS  
GALA**  
*Plaza Hotel,  
New York City*



**COMMENCEMENT**  
*Meadowlands  
Expo Center*



**ALUMNI  
WEEKEND**  
*Campus*

Get answers at [events@stevens.edu](mailto:events@stevens.edu)

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*The Class of 1979 at their 40th reunion*