February 2014

Dear fellow member of the Columbia community:

I am writing to mark the end of The Columbia Campaign, which we announced in September 2006 and concluded on December 31, 2013. This is truly an instance where the number speaks for itself: the final total was more than $6.1 billion, representing the largest sum raised by a single fundraising campaign in Ivy League history and the second largest ever raised by any university. Of three things we can be certain. This record will be broken – indeed, by Columbia in our next campaign! We will not for a moment pause in the effort to supplement the University’s financial foundation, which is the eternal spring that feeds the creativity of our extraordinary students and unmatched faculty. And we will not waver in strengthening the sense of a devoted Columbia community sharing a common future, which was notably enhanced during the Campaign by the growth and development of the new Columbia Alumni Association (CAA), working in partnership with all of Columbia’s schools.

Even the bare statistics underlying the Campaign total are amazing and should give us heart for Columbia’s future: more than $1 billion has been raised for student financial aid across our schools. Close to $1 billion in capital funding has been dedicated to 40 different facilities projects, which will make their presence felt on the Morningside campus, at the Medical Center, at our Baker Athletics Complex, at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, and, most significantly, on our new 17-acre campus in West Harlem, in an area by the Hudson River known as Manhattanville. More than 260 endowed professorships will enhance Columbia’s world-class faculty. All this and more, remarkably, has been made possible by Columbia supporters residing in 141 countries, with 128,000 new donors. This vast personal engagement with the institution and commitment of resources is nothing less than extraordinary, and, so too, is the institution’s renewed capacity for Columbia to help society overcome the fateful challenges in the century ahead.

The education of each new generation is our collective responsibility, as is the search for new knowledge that will redound to the betterment of humankind and the natural world. These undertakings are both precious and priceless, and together constitute the fundamental reason why Columbia University has now endured for 260 years and – I have not the slightest doubt – will continue to be one of a handful of leading academic institutions for centuries to come. But, in that arc of institutional history, this particular moment should be hailed as the milestone it is, and as the achievement of more than 200,000 donors and volunteers who have given so generously of both their resources and their energies to make this possible. With all of you, we share our most sincere and deepest thanks and a sense of heightened possibilities as we begin to write Columbia’s next chapter.

Sincerely,

Lee C. Bollinger