



## The Latest in Pawprint: September 25, 2015

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### Garrett cites Cornell and 'Ithaka' spirit as lifetime journeys



Cornell University is a state of mind, a beginning and a destination, much like the “Ithaka” of C.P. Cavafy’s poem about Ulysses’ journey home, said President Elizabeth Garrett Sept. 18 following her installation as the university’s 13th president.

With nary a cloud in the sky and warm, late-summer temperatures, Garrett’s inauguration ceremonies were held on the Arts Quad under the watchful gaze of the statues of the university’s founder, Ezra Cornell, and first president, Andrew Dickson White. Thousands watched, on the Arts Quad and online.

The acrobatic percussion of Yamatai, Cornell’s Taiko drumming group, began the ceremony, followed by selections from the Cornell University Chorus and Wind Symphony as the academic procession traveled from Olin Library to the quad.

Calling Garrett “the 13th in a series of extraordinary leaders who have, over 150 years, helped build Cornell,” Robert Harrison ’76, chair of the Cornell Board of Trustees, spoke about Cornell’s 150 years of history and its past presidents before introducing Garrett and conducting the investiture.

Harrison quoted the late university historian Morris Bishop, Class of 1913, who, at Cornell’s centennial celebration in 1965, said: “It is your duty to look forward and not back, and without forgetting old wisdom, to seek a wisdom ever new, to prepare an even greater Cornell.”

“Bishop’s exhortation is especially meaningful today,” Harrison said. “His advice is at once practical and lofty, exactly like Cornell.”

The Cornell University Garrett inherits, Harrison said, “has been shaped by its traditions and achievements, but also by an adamant refusal to sit still and accept the status quo.” It is this dynamic, he said, that has built the Cornell we cherish.

### **Faculty and students as voyage partners**

In her address, Garrett spoke of “the spirit of Cornell that frames our journey” and stressed the importance of the faculty as the foundation of the university; students as partners in the voyage of discovery and making a difference in the world; and the growing Cornell Tech campus in New York City that amounts to a new land grant.

Garrett quoted former Cornell historian Carl Becker, who explained the university’s character was formed by a different freedom than that which characterized other universities: “Something less formal, something less self-regarding, something more worldly, something, I venture to say, a bit more impudent.” With that freedom comes responsibility, Becker notably said, which means Cornell’s work must be continuously re-evaluated and re-created to meet current challenges, Garrett said.

Returning to the Cavafy poem several times during her speech, Garrett described how we can “remain true to our ‘Ithaka’ ... as we embark on our next 150 years.”

“The faculty of any great university define its spirit,” Garrett said, and quoted A.D. White’s famous line: “Better a splendid and complete faculty in a barn than an insufficient faculty in a palace.”

“The recruitment, development and retention of the best faculty remain our paramount priorities,” Garrett said, noting that the faculty is the bedrock of teaching, research, creative work and Cornell’s public mission; it is they who apply that knowledge to the world’s most pressing problems; and it is the faculty “who attract the finest students and inspire them to embark on their own adventures of learning.”

While seeking to continue hiring the best faculty in a competitive global environment, the university must focus its energies and resources strategically, Garrett said, noting, “we remain dedicated to the diversity of disciplines and subjects that we find on all our campuses, but realistically, no institution can be excellent in ‘any study.’” She said Cornell must critically assess which studies to emphasize in its quest for excellence, organizing “ourselves in ways that ensure our work has the greatest impact, that propel us forward to innovations and new applications.” The university must be guided by the spirit of “any study” by defining scholarly targets with breadth, and taking into consideration “our impact on policy and the quality of life throughout the world.”

While higher education and its cost in the United States has been the subject of much public criticism and debate, Garrett said, “It is beyond dispute that an intense residential undergraduate experience at America’s great research universities is one of the very best investments any family can make.

“Because of the experience at Cornell, our graduates will have more fulfilling opportunities on their journeys; they will have brighter economic futures; but, most importantly, they will experience life’s adventures more deeply and with greater satisfaction,” Garrett said. “Their education is worthy of their own investment, our country’s investment, and the investment of Cornellians who have come before them – because our graduates will define the future.”

In the coming months, Garrett said, the university will focus more intensely on the residential undergraduate experience, defining as a community the shared intellectual experience all Cornell students should encounter and “ensuring they can more easily navigate the complexities of our diverse university to construct meaningful plans of study.”

Citing the Cavafy poem, Garrett spoke of those on the Cornell journey of discovery who can stop at the university’s “trading stations” around the globe: “in Tanzania and Rome; in Geneva, New York, and Doha, Qatar; in Washington, D.C., and Maine; in every county of New York through our cooperative extension presence.”

Most significant is Cornell’s presence in New York City, she said – no other leading American university can claim this duality: a home in a quintessential college town and also a substantial footprint in an international urban center.

Cornell Tech in particular, which already is redefining graduate education, represents a “new land grant” (as described by former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg) that is helping the city become a leader in technological innovation. But this opportunity will be a defining moment for Cornell only if the lessons learned at Cornell Tech are brought back to faculty, students and staff here in Ithaca, she said. All colleges must find deeper ways to connect with Cornell Tech, she said, involving

all disciplines in collaborations, degree programs and new delivery platforms.

These connections and entrepreneurial aspirations must benefit not just faculty and students in New York City, she said, but must bring new possibilities for faculty and students in Ithaca, as well as economic opportunities for Ithaca and upstate New York.

Cornell is charting its course for the next 150 years, she said. "... we will lead the world in creating new paths to discovery, knowledge and the many ways we can move closer to truth, in launching our students on their own voyages.

"I look forward to working with all Cornellians – faculty, students, staff, alumni, parents and supporters – to navigate the next stage of this remarkable journey, traveling to the many diverse 'Ithakas' that await our discovery."

Alice Fulton, the Ann S. Bowers Professor of English, read several poems (three, including one written specifically for the inauguration, are [reprinted in the official inauguration book](#)). BJ Siasoco, chair of the Employee Assembly; Juliana Batista, president of the Student Assembly; and Richard Walroth, president of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, gave readings as well.

Selections from the Cornell University Chorus, Glee Club and Cornell Wind Symphony, concluding with the alma mater, closed the ceremony as the academic recessional began, played out by the Big Red Marching Band.

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## Cornell United Way campaign kickoff Oct. 2; volunteers wanted

The [Cornell United Way](#) campaign kicks off Oct. 2, noon-1 p.m. at the Memorial Room, Willard Straight Hall, featuring remarks from Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick, local United Way leadership and Cornellians.

Enjoy some Cornell apples and cider.

Learn about the United Way of Tompkins County – and how it benefits campus and community – and enter a raffle for prizes, including:

- lunch at Banfi's with President Elizabeth Garrett
- lunch at Banfi's with Mayor Myrick
- a night at the Cornell Club in New York City, round-trip Campus to Campus bus service included
- an iPad Mini 3
- Cornell Store and Cornell Dining gift cards
- tickets to Cornell athletic events
- \$150 gift certificates for the Heights Café, and Le Café Cent-Dix

Highlighting this event will be details on the new Cornell United Way electronic donation system that will make donating easier. The program starts at 12:10 p.m. sharp.

For information on the Tompkins County Community Campaign goal, announced at the Stephen E. Garner Day of Caring Sept. 16, see <http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2015/09/county-united-way-announces-campaign-goal-day-caring>.

### Campaign volunteers needed

Cornell's United Way campaign is looking for campus colleagues who care about our local communities, and want to help CU United Way this fall.

The campaign needs volunteers for two-three hours a month through January to help promote the campus campaign with data and updates.

If you would like to be a 2015 campaign volunteer, contact Penny Givin at [pjg1@cornell.edu](mailto:pjg1@cornell.edu) or 255-4347. Or come to the

campaign kickoff Oct. 2 at noon at the Memorial Room, Willard Straight Hall.

Cornell's United Way office will then be in touch about the campaign and volunteer information.

[United Way of Tompkins County](#) supports dozens of [local agencies](#).

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## 'Tis the Season for Back to School! Education benefits for employees

### Education benefits for Cornell employees

One of the great things about working at Cornell is that the pursuit of education is a priority for all members of our community – including employees.

Cornell provides a full range of excellent educational benefits to our benefits-eligible workforce. So get into the spirit of “back-to-school season” – it’s the perfect time to take advantage of these opportunities to sharpen skills or earn a certificate or degree.

#### Go all the way: [Employee Degree Program](#)

If you are a benefits-eligible employee who has one year of full-time service, you are eligible to receive funding for an undergraduate or graduate degree program at Cornell University. This is simply an amazing benefit – earn a Cornell degree while you work for the university. The undergraduate benefit is not taxable; the graduate benefit may be taxable. Consideration for funding occurs after you have received acceptance to a program at Cornell and have your supervisor’s approval. Check out this handy [FAQ](#), or view a four-and-a half minute [webcast](#) for more information.

#### Take Cornell classes: Extramural Study

If you’re not interested in pursuing a degree, you can still take advantage of thousands of Cornell classes to assist in your career and personal development through the [School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions](#). Courses do not need to be job-related but must have supervisor’s approval. Depending on your employment status, tuition for four credits per semester will be waived. This program is offered to employees who are benefits-eligible and full-time, part-time or temporary. A temporary employee must be benefits-eligible, and the appointment must span the semester in which the class is held. Benefits-eligible employees on family medical leave continue to be eligible while on leave. Those on short-term or long-term disability, as well as retirees or those on lay-off status, are also eligible. Restrictions and limitations apply; take a look at these [FAQ’s](#), or view a three-and-a-half minute [webcast](#) for more details.

#### Take classes elsewhere: Tuition Aid

This program provides tuition assistance for coursework not available at Cornell that contributes directly to the improvement of knowledge or skills related to your job. Tuition Aid is a partial reimbursement program that can apply to classes towards a degree program or job-related workshops. Institutions must be accredited through the American Council on Education. Read these [FAQ’s](#) and watch this [webcast](#) for more information.

#### Save up! New York’s 529 College Savings Program

Open a college savings account for your children, grandchildren, yourself or anyone you wish to designate as a beneficiary. Cornell employees can enroll for automatic payroll deductions to make contributions. When the funds are used to pay your beneficiary’s qualified higher education expenses (at any eligible school, including out of state) you won’t have to pay federal or New York income taxes. Restrictions and limitations apply. Visit [www.nysaves.org](http://www.nysaves.org) for more information.

#### For your kids: Cornell Children’s Tuition Scholarship

The CCTS program provides children of eligible employees a partial scholarship for study at Cornell or other accredited

institutions. The award is based on the hire date of the employee. See the [FAQ's](#) and the [CCTS Booklet](#) for more details.

**More ways to save: [Educational Tax Credits](#)**

If you're paying for a student's education, you may be eligible for certain tax credits. Visit this [web page](#) to get an idea about some of the tax benefits available, then speak with your tax advisor for information on whether you would be eligible and also how to apply.

**Non-academic: [Employee Training Opportunities](#)**

Cornell also provides a vast number of non-academic courses that can help improve your job skills, or cover such topics as performance, compliance, leadership, diversity and wellness. Many are free of charge to Cornell employees and available online at your own pace, through [Lynda.com](#) and [SkillSoft](#). Visit the [HR Training](#) web page to get started.

**Bottom Line: Go for it!**

If you're seeking to improve yourself, your skills or your education, working at Cornell offers exceptional opportunities. Make the most of them! Watch for announcements of education workshops offered each fall and spring in Career-Life Digest emails. If you have questions about education benefits, contact Benefit Services at 607-255-3936, [benefits@cornell.edu](mailto:benefits@cornell.edu).

*Sue Brightly is a communications specialist for the Division of Human Resources and Safety Services.*

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## **Inclusive Excellence Academy unveils diversity programming**

Workshops on such topics as veterans in the workforce; unconscious biases; workplace bullying; and creating a safer, more inclusive environment for all members of the Cornell community are being offered this year under the auspices of Cornell's Inclusive Excellence Academy.

These programs are free of charge; certain programs are tailored to the needs of specific populations – staff, managers and supervisors, department heads and human resource professionals, graduate and professional students and postdocs, and Diversity Council members, for instance.

Some programs incorporate performances by the Cornell Interactive Theatre Ensemble, fostering dialogue from multiple points of view about the challenges of working and living together in a diverse world. Others are led by noted speakers from Cornell and elsewhere:

- Kam Wong, vice president for diversity and inclusion planning and administration for Prudential Financial, will discuss unconscious biases that can impact the selection process and undermine an organization's commitment to hiring diverse individuals, [Oct. 8](#);
- Brian Patchcoski, associate dean and director of Cornell's LGBT Resource Center, will talk about the Safer People/Safer Places LGBTQA Support Network [Oct. 14](#). It seeks to create a safe and inclusive environment for all members of the campus community by reducing heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and queerphobia.
- James Schmeling, co-founder and managing director of the Syracuse University Institute for Veterans and Military Families, will present the business case for recruiting and hiring veterans in higher education, [Oct. 20](#);
- On [Nov. 4](#), Brian Patchcoski will present a workshop that covers the basic terminology associated with the transgender and/or gender nonconforming community.

“The IEA was created to support an inclusive educational environment and workplace at Cornell in accordance with the campuswide Toward New Destinations diversity framework, which requires each college and administrative unit to annually identify and pursue diversity initiatives for their groups,” said Lynette Chappell-Williams, associate vice president for inclusion and workforce diversity. “IEA programs are a meaningful expression of Cornell University's commitment to

inclusion,” she said.

A [complete listing of the IEA programs](#) for this fall and next spring is available. For more information, call 607-255-3976 or email [ie-academy@cornell.edu](mailto:ie-academy@cornell.edu).

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## Professional clothing giveaway for staff and faculty

**Donation drop-off days: Oct. 15 and 16**

Donate gently worn professional clothing, business casual attire, shoes and accessories that are no longer of use to you. Others will benefit from your generosity. Drop-off locations:

- Cheryl McGraw in 130 Day Hall, [crm54@cornell.edu](mailto:crm54@cornell.edu)
- Beth McKinney in 303 Helen Newman Hall, [bm20@cornell.edu](mailto:bm20@cornell.edu)
- Gail Sullivan in CUHA Atrium, [gms9@cornell.edu](mailto:gms9@cornell.edu)
- Robin Dinger in EHOB, [rld8@cornell.edu](mailto:rld8@cornell.edu)
- Liz Flint in Myron Taylor Hall Atrium, [es232@cornell.edu](mailto:es232@cornell.edu)

**Giveaway day: Oct. 20, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Room 700, Clark Hall**

Gently worn professional clothing, business casual, shoes and accessories will be offered at no cost for those who are interested.

See [https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/clothing\\_drive.html](https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/clothing_drive.html) for a list of appropriate clothing to drop off, or contact Amy Vondercheck for more information at 255-7259 or [are5@cornell.edu](mailto:are5@cornell.edu).

Sponsored by Cornell Employee Assembly, Division of Human Resources and Safety Services, the CARE Fund and the Cornell Wellness Program.

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## Free flu vaccines Sept. 25 at Willard Straight Hall

Influenza is already hitting campus. The sooner you get vaccinated, the sooner you'll be protected against the flu. Cornell staff, faculty, students and retirees can get their free vaccination at this Friday's walk-in clinic, **Sept. 25, 1-4 p.m.** at Willard Straight Hall. No appointment is necessary; just bring your Cornell ID. (Note: FluMist is not available on Friday, but will be at future vaccine clinics.) The next clinics scheduled so far are:

**Oct. 6**, 2:30-4:30 p.m., at the Carol Tatkon Center, Room 3330

**Oct. 7**, 9 a.m.-noon, East Hill Office Building, Atrium

**Oct. 14**, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Vet School Medical Center, Atrium

For more information and updates, check [Gannett's website](#).

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