

# The Columbia Campaign for Undergraduate Education



## School of General Studies | At a Glance

“It’s really up to us as GS alumni to make the same kind of commitment as have our friends at Columbia College. The opportunity to attend GS provided a life-changing, transformative experience for those fortunate enough to have been its beneficiaries. Now, more than ever, we can help put the School in a position to provide continuing opportunities for aspiring nontraditional students.”

—Larry Lawrence '69  
Columbia Campaign  
Council Co-Chair

## Serving Nontraditional Students at the Forefront of Undergraduate Education

As the nation’s premier liberal arts college serving nontraditional students, the School of General Studies stands at the forefront of undergraduate education. The School, founded in 1947, is the only freestanding college of its kind in the Ivy League—and the most diverse devoted to nontraditional students in the country.

Today, General Studies enrolls exceptional, goal-oriented individuals seeking an Ivy League education—among them dancers, soldiers, screenwriters, and executives. Some would like to change careers. Some are immigrants. Some are the first in their families to pursue a college degree.

Bringing a wealth of life experience to the classroom, General Studies students attend the same rigorous Core Curriculum classes, are taught by the same faculty, and earn the same degree as other Columbians. Like their fellow Columbia graduates, they leave campus poised to assume leading roles in their chosen fields.

### Why a Campaign?

This unprecedented campaign for General Studies is designed to educate, inspire, and engage donors to support the School’s ambitious goals. Individuals who believe in the General Studies mission and the power of a Columbia education are stepping forward to provide critical support—many for the first time—and are asking others to do the same.

**Through gifts to the Campaign, donors will enable the School of General Studies to:**

- **Increase financial aid for General Studies students**
- **Recruit, teach, and advise outstanding students**
- **Attract and retain Columbia’s renowned teaching faculty**
- **Solidify Columbia’s place as the national leader in undergraduate education for nontraditional students**



“Everyone can benefit from a superb liberal arts education, but the reality is that people may come to it at different points in their lives. The School of General Studies provides an avenue for the best of these students to enter Columbia. It is also Columbia’s route to a more vital and varied campus, one fully responsive to the needs and potentials of New York City and the world.”

—Peter Awn  
Dean, School of  
General Studies

Columbia University stands at a historic juncture, shaping the issues affecting our global community. Columbia alumni are in the spotlight, leading public, private, and nonprofit sectors in New York City, across our nation, and around the world. A renewed emphasis on undergraduate education permeates the University. Maintaining and enhancing the School’s leadership position depends on alumni, parents, and friends committing themselves to its future.

The value of a Columbia education—distinguished by intimate seminar-style classes, the Core Curriculum, and the presence of New York as an extended classroom—is incalculable. But its cost is far higher than tuition alone can cover.

For the nontraditional student, the biggest challenge can be funding this education while facing the competing demands of school, job, and family. At the School of General Studies, students have access to dedicated advisers to help shape academic plans, find viable educational financing, and balance complicated lives.

## Goals and Priorities

Gifts made through the Campaign further strategic goals for enhanced financial aid, a stronger faculty, and improved student services.

### Columbia Campaign targets to reach by 2011:

- \$15 million to endow scholarships—more grants and fewer loans
- \$10 million in annual giving to support current financial aid and key programs
- Shared goals for faculty endowments of \$170 million as part of the overall \$865 million Columbia Campaign for Undergraduate Education



### MARILYN CHARLOT '96

Hometown: Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; raised in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Path to General Studies: U.S. Army Staff Sergeant

Major: Economics

Today: Vice President Technology, Goldman Sachs

“My Columbia education saved my soul. . . . I found the answers to so many things there. I was surrounded by very mature people both inside and outside the classroom. It was the perfect place for my transition.”

**FINANCIAL AID GOAL:**  
**\$15 MILLION**

## Students First: Today's Financial Aid Imperative

“Many students faced with high debt after graduation have to think twice about what they will study. Scholarships are critical in freeing us to make choices based on what we want to learn rather than on financial considerations.”

—Robert Ast '08

On average, Columbia's General Studies graduates confront their futures with more than \$40,000 in student-loan debt. Many students make a significant economic sacrifice—without guarantee of future financial success—to pursue an Ivy League liberal arts education.

To reduce student debt, the School of General Studies faces challenges on two fronts: We need to build a more robust scholarship endowment for long-term support while gaining the additional flexibility of current-use annual giving.

Only through endowment support can we protect financial aid from the yearly competition it faces from other budgetary pressures. A gift to the endowment is a legacy that will transform the lives of Columbia General Studies students—graduation after graduation, generation after generation.

- The School of General Studies has a far smaller financial aid endowment than many of its peers, and the competition to recruit the most qualified students is increasing rapidly. In some cases, peer institutions can offer applicants two to three times more than the financial aid packages that General Studies can currently afford. Unless the School of General Studies can offer competitive financial aid packages, there is an ongoing danger of losing the best candidates to other colleges.
- Because of its limited financial endowment, General Studies can offer only about half of what Columbia College students can expect. Currently, only 22 percent of General Studies student tuition is defrayed by grant aid, in contrast to 40 percent at Columbia College.

### **TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID: ADDRESSING DEBT BURDEN**

- Tuition: \$36,300 (for a 30-credit program); \$1,210 per credit hour
- Living expenses: \$19,905 (estimated), including room and board, books, and commuting costs
- Financial aid recipients: 70 percent of student body
- Average scholarship: \$8,000
- Average student's debt at graduation: \$42,705 (for 2007–2008 graduates)
- Annual scholarship budget: \$7.9 million (includes \$2.4 million endowment income and gifts)



### **CHRISTOPHER GRAY '75**

**Hometown:** New York, N.Y.

**Path to General Studies:** Taxi driver, postal carrier

**Major:** Art History

**Today:** Columnist, *The New York Times*; founder, Office of Metropolitan History

“I envisioned myself at 25, 40, or 60, and it dawned on me that I did not want to be a letter carrier for the rest of my life. I realized I was ready to go back to school. At GS, someone decided to take a chance on me—throw the dice and see how I would fare. I am grateful they did.”

**FACULTY AND TEACHING  
ENDOWMENT: \$170 MILLION**

“Topics such as climate change and biodiversity loss can seem abstract and distant, but General Studies students, like the ones who had done NGO work in Africa, can relate them to concrete effects on people’s lives. They are invaluable to our discussions.”

—Jacqueline Van Gorkom  
Professor of Astronomy

## Faculty and Teaching Endowment

Shared goals for faculty endowments of \$170 million with The Columbia Campaign for Undergraduate Education

A successful Campaign will fund additional faculty positions and strengthen both the Core Curriculum and departmental offerings. The result for students: more curricular options and closer connection with top faculty.

A renowned Arts and Sciences faculty allows Columbia to offer one of the finest and most distinctive undergraduate experiences in the country. Faculty endowments, including chairs, are essential to recruit and retain the very best professors.

Strengthening the faculty is critical to the future of the School of General Studies. The small size of Core classes, the rapid growth of enrollments in select majors, the need for broad curricular coverage, and the fierce competition for the most talented faculty among top universities make the pressure on faculty budgets particularly intense.

In 2006, among many generous gifts early in the Campaign, University Trustee Gerry Lenfest '58LAW pledged \$37.5 million to match endowed professorship gifts. The 25 Lenfest chairs are now complete, but the goal of reaching 50 new endowments continues. Matching funds remain available in priority areas.



### **MASON BEARD '04**

**Hometown:** St. Louis, Mo.

**Path to GS:** Dancer, Pennsylvania Ballet

**Major:** Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures

**Career after GS:** Assistant Director, Council on Foreign Relations

**Today:** Student, Columbia Business School

“The Columbia University education I received has opened doors I had long believed were closed; my transition from ballet to foreign policy would not have been possible without the opportunity presented by the School of General Studies.”

ANNUAL FUND GOAL: \$10 MILLION

## Annual Support: Broad Alumni Participation

In the current financial climate, the flexibility of annual support allows gifts from alumni, parents, and friends to be invested in key priorities like current-use financial aid. While a University-wide campaign inspires large gifts, it also serves to galvanize annual giving of all amounts.

The Columbia Campaign, launched in 2006 and continuing through 2011, highlights alumni engagement as a vital institutional goal to be gauged by:

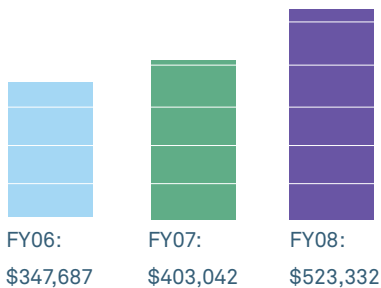
- participation in alumni events and
- annual giving.

Events and programs run by the University-wide Columbia Alumni Association (CAA) and the General Studies Alumni Association (GSAA) keep alumni connected more closely than ever with one another, with current students, and with the University.

Since the beginning of The Columbia Campaign for Undergraduate Education in 2006, donations to the General Studies annual fund campaign have increased by 51 percent, and the size of the average annual gift has grown by 39 percent.

The momentum must continue. Together with alumni, parents, and friends, the School of General Studies must raise the funds necessary to keep leading the field of nontraditional education for decades to come.

### ALUMNI STEPPING UP: 51 PERCENT INCREASE IN ALUMNI GIFTS DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS



For more information, contact:

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### MICHAEL MARGITICH '99

Hometown: New York City; grew up in Yonkers, NY

Path to GS: Aspiring actor

Major: English Literature

Today: Senior Deputy Director, Museum of Modern Art

“I went to GS for very practical reasons, to get a good education while continuing to pursue my dream of acting. During my time at Columbia, I not only received a world-class education, I also found the job that would launch my career.”

“The School of General Studies epitomizes Columbia’s values in bringing together in our classrooms a population that truly reflects our city and our world, with its diverse voices and experiences. It is one of several ways in which Columbia forged a new model for the undergraduate experience.”

—Lee C. Bollinger ’71LAW, President, Columbia University



## WHAT CAMPAIGN SUCCESS WILL MEAN

- \$15 million in new financial aid endowment for General Studies
- \$10 million annual giving designated for immediate support
- Ten percent growth in faculty targeted toward undergraduate education
- \$170 million in new endowment supporting Arts and Sciences faculty who teach General Studies students
- Fifty new endowed chairs, critical to recruiting and retaining the very best professors
- Increased numbers of General Studies alumni, parents, and friends engaged in the School as donors, mentors, and volunteers

THE COLUMBIA  
CAMPAIGN