

Karen Hitchcock's Legacy: Engagement with Society



Photos: Mark Schmidt

She was known for her ability to organize coalitions and work with diverse groups. Those skills were defining characteristics of Karen Hitchcock's leadership style as the University at Albany's 16th president. From 1996 to 2004, she led a significant expansion of

facilities and programs designed to prepare students for today's challenges and to lift UAlbany into the top echelon of American public universities.

Above all, Hitchcock championed the University's engagement with the

world. "No sector of society can go it alone anymore. We must be right at the center of what's going on in society and helping to lead those efforts," she said early on in her presidency.

Now, she has accepted a new challenge. On July 1, Hitchcock became principal of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, one of the most respected institutions of higher education in Canada. She is the first American to be named to

the position, which is equivalent to the title of president.

John Ryan, meanwhile, is serving as interim president while the University carries out a search for a successor to Hitchcock.

At a farewell in her honor May 7, UAlbany's deans and vice presidents presented Hitchcock with a custom-designed version of the traditional com-

mencement pin surrounded by 16 stones signifying her term of office as the University's 16th president. The amethyst stones, which are purple, are set in 14-karat yellow gold. Her name and the years of her presidency are engraved on the back. The box reads:

"Wear this close to your heart to remind you that you will always be close to ours."

— Christine Hanson McKnight



The Hitchcock Years

1996

- Karen R. Hitchcock becomes UAlbany's 16th president.
- The New York Giants choose UAlbany as their summer training site following a bid from a coalition of community leaders led by Hitchcock.
- UAlbany acquires the East Campus as a home for the School of Public Health and its incubator biotechnology businesses.
- Project Renaissance is introduced to strengthen undergraduate teaching and provide a small-college experience within a big university.



Photo: Gary Gold

Greeting students

1997

- The Center for Environmental Sciences and Technology Management (CESTM) opens.

1998

- With \$120 million pledged from the state, UAlbany launches the first phase of its master plan for new construction and renovations to build a 21st-century learning environment.



Dedicating new space for the College of Arts and Sciences

1999

- University athletic teams begin competing in NCAA Division I.



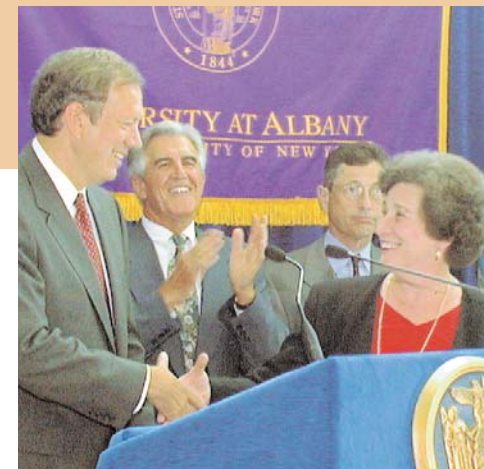
Entertaining philanthropist Morris "Marty" Silverman

2001

- IBM pledges \$100 million and New York State \$50 million to establish the Center of Excellence in Nanoelectronics.
- Construction begins on the multi-disciplinary Life Sciences Research Building, now almost complete.

2002

- UAlbany opens the Boor Sculpture Studio.
- The University is named home of International Sematech North, a \$400 million research facility.
- Empire Commons, offering apartment-style living for students, opens.



Welcoming, from left, Gov. George Pataki, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver at CESTM

2003

- UAlbany announces its \$500 million Bold. Vision. Campaign for the University at Albany, the most ambitious private fund-raising effort in its history, and the largest comprehensive fund-raising campaign of any public university in the history of New York.
- Construction begins on the University's Gen*NY*Sis Center for Excellence in Cancer Genomics on the East Campus, founded with the support of Sen. Joseph Bruno, majority leader of the New York State Senate.

2004

- Initiatives for Women establishes the Karen R. Hitchcock New Frontiers Fund to support women doctoral students who show promise of making a difference in society.



Receiving the Bread and Roses Award for contributions to gender equity at UAlbany (with Professors Emeritae Francine Wattman Frank, left, and Joan Schulz)