

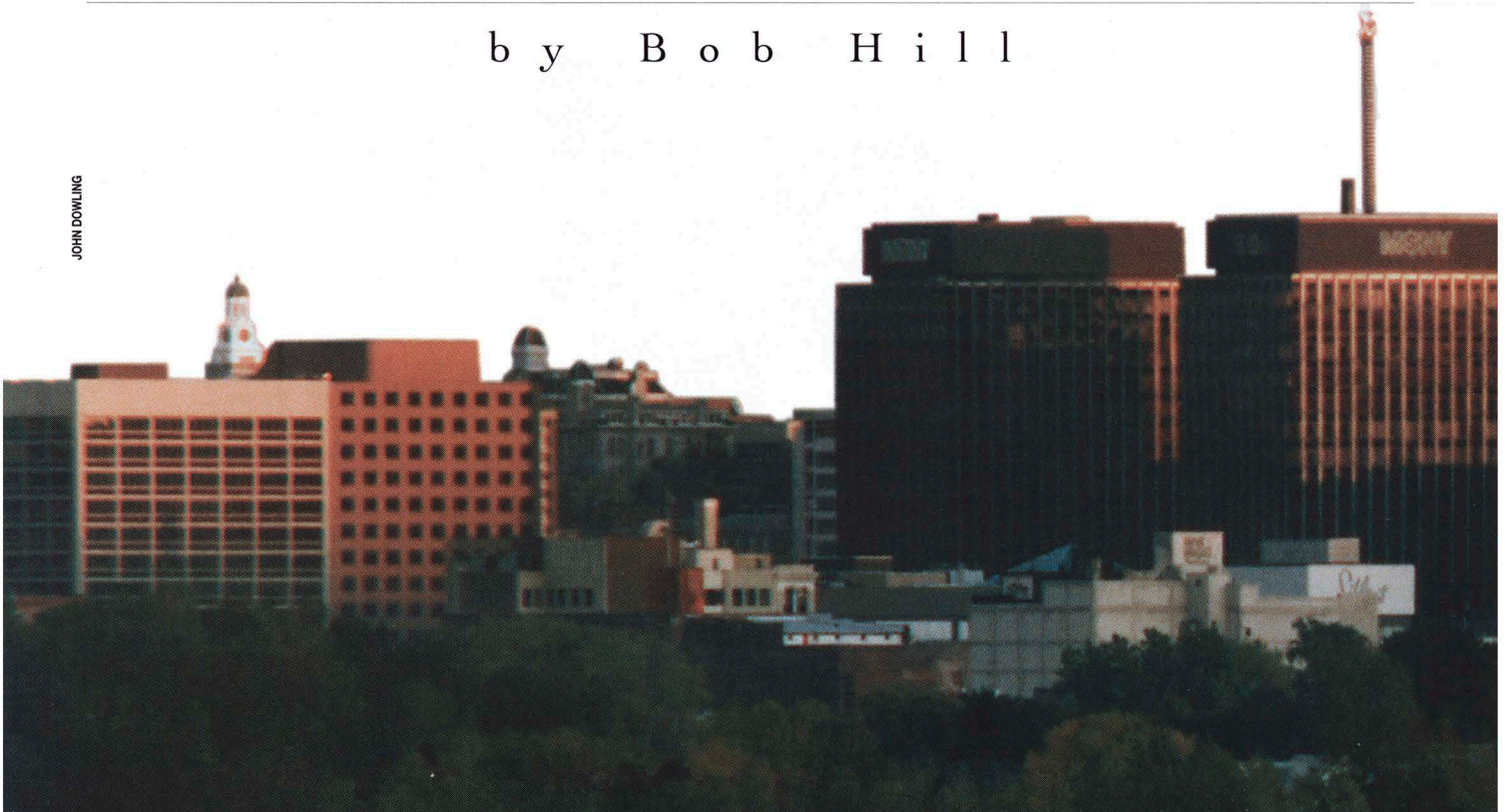
For better or worse:
A healthy union between town
and gown makes each stronger.

a trip
to

the southern reaches of the Syracuse University campus will lead you to Skytop Road, where you can venture past South Campus housing, the Goldstein Student Center, and the Skytop Office Building, a lonely outpost fronting 90 acres of mud and weeds, as well as Peter Webber's vision of the future.

Webber is director of Syracuse University Research Park and chief cheerleader for a project that could eventually bring 2,000 research and

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JOHN DOWLING

development jobs to the city, and an academic and economic windfall to the University.

The ground-breaking this summer will launch what Webber calls "the biggest economic news in Syracuse since the MONY towers were built, and that was about 25 years ago. This has the potential to add something really significant to the economy of Central New York. Research Park will house new businesses, employ local people, and enhance the University's educational and research mission."

Research Park is a long-term project designed to move technology from the halls of academia to the bottom lines of business. It's also the latest in a long list of projects—including the Carrier Dome and the Center for Science and Technology—that have been partnered to fruition by SU and Syracuse's Metropolitan Development Association (MDA).

"In the next 10 years, we foresee Research Park providing \$90 million in growth to the community," says Irwin Davis, executive vice president of the MDA, which represents the business leadership of Central New York. "The role the University has played in the community is one of the main reasons for local economic growth over the past 35 years. In my mind, the University is the community. Period. Where would Central New York be without Syracuse University?"

Indeed, the impact of the Universi-

ty—its teachers, researchers, employees, students, seminars, events, and visitors, its mere presence—can be felt in almost every corner of Onondaga County and in every aspect of life in greater Syracuse. From the Red Cross to the Carrier Circle hotels, from bars and restaurants in Armory Square to the SUNY Health Science Center, from the Shonnard Street Boys and Girls Club to the Chamber of Commerce, SU is an integral partner in Syracuse's well-being.

The University is also a beneficiary. The schools, businesses, and agencies of Onondaga County provide an ideal training ground for University students and researchers. Meanwhile, the area's many malls, restaurants, parks, and museums, plus the splendor of the Finger Lakes—even the endless drifts of snow—make Syracuse a culturally diverse and appealing locale for those associated with or simply visiting the University.

"The relationship between the city and the University is mutually beneficial," says Roy Bernardi, mayor of Syracuse and a 1973 recipient of a master's degree from the School of Education. "The University provides a first-class education. It brings thousands of people into the community. It brings business into the community. The University is really part of the city."

SU Chancellor Kenneth A. Shaw wouldn't have it any other way.

"It isn't just that we do all these wonderful things for the city and it stops there," says Shaw. "We are very much dependent on a strong and viable region in Central New York, and it's in our best interests to make that happen. We can't achieve our goals in a region that isn't progressive and doesn't provide a positive quality of life for the people who work and go to school here."

the impact of the University on Syracuse and Onondaga County is, first and foremost, financial. SU has an annual payroll exceeding \$150 million and ranks as the county's third-largest employer. Annual expenditures by students, employees, and SU visitors exceed \$200 million, and each year some 900,000 people—including nearly 300,000 from outside of Onondaga County—attend University events ranging from conferences to concerts to athletic events.

The Carrier Dome welcomes many of these visitors. It hosts athletic contests (SU football, basketball, and lacrosse, high school tournaments, occasional NCAA championship events), concerts (Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, and Pink Floyd were recent visitors), and assorted events such as the annual Boy Scouts Hiawatha Council Boy Power Dinner and the



PHOTOMEDIA



Nearly 900,000 people visit Syracuse University annually, many of them to attend events at the Carrier Dome. Aside from University sporting events, the Dome hosts concerts, and events such as the Billy Graham Crusade.

New York State Field Band Championships.

Across campus, Bird Library offers public access to a wealth of information and resources. Downtown, University College offers SU degree programs in more than 30 disciplines to part-time students, most of whom live and work in the community and typically must attend evening classes.

SU cultural resources available to area residents include Lowe Art Gallery, Syracuse Stage, the Community Folk Art Gallery, and University College's Thursday Morning Roundtable, which brings community leaders together with prominent speakers for weekly discussions on current issues.

"Economically, educationally, and culturally, Syracuse University makes a great splash in the community," says Douglas Barclay, president of the MDA and chair of SU's board of trustees. "The research, cultural opportunities, and the faculty and students give the area a lot of vitality."

Many students also provide the area with something more tangible—themselves.

A study by the public affairs program of the Maxwell School found more than 2,500 students spent in

excess of 180,000 hours volunteering in the community in 1991. Such volunteerism has been further encouraged by the creation of the Chancellor's Award for Public Service, which began in 1992 and is presented to the residence hall, residence floor, and individual with the greatest number of public service hours. "There's enormous potential, only partially realized, for our students to give back to the community," says Shaw.

Each of SU's 13 colleges contribute to the community in some fashion. Examples include:

- The School of Education's Counselor Internship Program, in which graduate students help find jobs for high school students who don't plan to attend college.

- The College for Human Development's Community Service Project, in which students provide food and nutrition services to the hungry, homeless, homebound, and terminally ill.

- The Maxwell School's University Reach program, in which students help at-risk youths gain self-esteem, academic skills, and career skills through various programs and projects.

In addition, the School of Social

Work annually sends hundreds of volunteers to some 150 agencies located throughout Central New York. Meanwhile, the College of Nursing has students develop programs at a local geriatric center and teach health education courses to members of boys and girls clubs.

"Students and faculty give hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of goods and services to the community," says public affairs professor and University Reach creator William Coplin. "Without them, many of the agencies served would be hard pressed to do what they're doing. We sponsor something called the Community Link Project. Agencies submit the projects they'd like done. In 1993-94, our policy studies majors completed about 60 projects, including telephone surveys and inputting data on computers. We asked the agencies to estimate the value of these services, and this year the value was in excess of \$110,000."

Local schools also benefit from SU's programs and people. Project Advance provides eligible high school students with college courses at a fraction of the cost. The School of Education provides student teachers. The College of Arts and Sciences sends professors and public affairs students to schools to start and facilitate programs.

"We've had a tremendous relationship with the University for years," says Syracuse Superintendent of Schools Robert DiFlorio, who received a master's degree from the School of Education in 1964. "So much of that relationship is based on the goodwill and efforts of both the city school district and the University working together for children."

for years,

SU and its closest neighbors were more near than dear. "Fortunately," says Anne Peterson, "attitudes have changed and relations have improved."

She should know. Peterson has three SU degrees—she earned her latest, a master's in public affairs, in May—and has lived in the neighborhood immediately east of the University for more than 25 years. She is the former executive director of UNPA, the University Neighborhood Preservation Association, and continues to be a board member of SEUNA, the Southeast University Neighborhood Association. She wants her neighborhood to flourish, and believes it's to the University's benefit to ensure that it does.

"The University and the city have parallel problems," she says. "The University is going through a serious downsizing and the city has a shrinking budget. Students live in this neighborhood, but their parents won't want them to if it becomes run-down. There's an overriding theme that we're in this together, that we need to satisfy everyone's best interests."

SU holds memberships on the boards of several neighborhood groups. These include the University Hill Corporation, a nonprofit organization representing the major institutions and churches in the University area, and UNPA, a nonprofit organization of residents whose primary mission is to promote owner occupancy in the University area. Among other services, UNPA provides home improvement and home acquisition loans, conducts home-buying seminars, and works with home owners and landlords to improve property values.

SU, UNPA, and the University Hill Corporation collaborated recently on a mutually beneficial project. Alan Culbertson, an absentee owner and 1975 graduate of the College of Law, wanted to sell his six rental properties for the purpose of reconvertng them to single-family homes for eventual sale to moderate-income families. The University got Culbertson together with the University Hill Corporation, which began purchasing the properties. UNPA subsequently provided the University Hill Corpora-

tion with interest-free loans to help cover renovation costs.

SU also took great pains to involve neighborhood groups in its plans to acquire portions of several campus streets from the city. Between January 1988 and March 1989, there were 49 accidents on campus portions of University Place, College Place, and South Crouse, University, and Euclid avenues.

To remedy the situation, the city granted SU a two-year lease on the streets. SU made \$2.5 million worth of improvements—adding street lights, traffic lights,

move cost the city parking revenue but allowed it to save money by not having to fund the street improvements.

SU considered the money well spent, having significantly reduced both on-campus traffic and accidents. Studies also found the changes had no adverse effect on the surrounding neighborhoods. No one, says Peterson, came away angry.

"The transfer of streets taught us a good deal about goodwill and commitment to the best interests of all concerned," says Eleanor Gallagher, exec-



GENE PAGE/SYRACUSE NEWSPAPERS

SU students provide thousands of hours of volunteer service to the Syracuse community. In April, environmental design majors did restoration work on the Rescue Mission facilities as part of a class assignment.

and widening portions of roads—rerouted the flow of traffic through the University, and restricted public use of College and University places.

Last November the Syracuse Common Council voted unanimously to accept the changes permanently and confer ownership to SU, which will continue to maintain the streets. The

utive assistant to Chancellor Shaw.

"It's been great to see people from the University coming to our association meetings, making presentations, and bringing our concerns back to the University," says Peterson.

"The more the University participates, the better we'll all be, because all of a sudden we find ourselves on the same side. For years there wasn't this 'we're-in-this-together' relationship. That has come about in the last four years, and we can only do better."

The University will do its part to ensure such improvement continues, insists Chancellor Shaw.

"Universities and cities that are to progress are going to do so because they resolve issues and tensions and work together," says Shaw. "Clearly, we can't go it alone." ■