

OpeningREMARKS

Bridge to the New Frontier

This summer, the Village of Cayuga, my hometown at the north end of Cayuga Lake, celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary. Cayuga is a minuscule dot on the map, but loomed large at the turn of the 19th century. One reason for this was the Cayuga Bridge, which provided passageway west for travelers attempting to cross Cayuga Lake and avoid the mosquito-infested marshes to the north. Growing up, little did I know that Cayuga was once on the edge of the frontier, the home of what was thought to be the longest bridge in America, stretching more than a mile long and wide enough "to allow two Conestoga wagons to pass each other," according to the *Encyclopedia of New York State*. "Part of a major route of westward migration, Cayuga Long Bridge, as it was also known, was popularly viewed as the dividing point between east and west. Many settlers of western New York State, Ohio, and Indiana passed over it, as did troops dispatched to the Niagara Frontier during the War of 1812."

The bridge was crushed by winter ice and rebuilt a couple times, but eventually travelers gained other options: They could board a steamboat south to Ithaca, hop on the rails, or access the Erie Canal to the north. As Central New York developed, it made its mark as an innovative and socially progressive region. Today, as CNY works to shift from a manufacturing-based to a knowledge-driven economy, we find ourselves at the threshold of another frontier—one that has no physical boundaries, but still relies heavily on innovation, entrepreneurial spirit, and personal drive to overcome obstacles and advance.

Here in Syracuse, the University plays a crucial role in that development. Research at the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems, for instance, will provide model technologies for improving indoor health, water quality, and clean and renewable energy sources. And, as you'll learn in this issue, the University is strengthening its future with a dynamic new capital campaign, which will create myriad exciting opportunities for the region to capitalize on. With the imagination and creativity of the brightest minds at work, we have our bridge to the future—and Syracuse can be a guiding force in the new frontier unfolding before us.



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