



# Celebrating Life Sciences

NEW DOORS OPEN TO INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMWORK

By David Marc



THE UNIVERSITY OFFICIALLY DEDICATED ITS DAZZLING NEW LIFE SCIENCES COMPLEX (LSC) last fall with a two-day celebration of the \$107 million state-of-the-art interdisciplinary teaching and research facility, the largest construction project ever undertaken by the University. Festivities included a keynote address by J. Craig Venter, a pioneering researcher who collaborated in the initial description of the human genome; the world premiere of "In Praise of Science," a musical piece by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Robert Ward, commissioned for the occasion; and a lecture by Spencer Wells, director of the National Geographic Society's genographic project, which traces the path of global human migration.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony under the striking glass canopy of the LSC's Milton Atrium, social nexus of the 230,000-square-foot complex, Chancellor Nancy Cantor praised the design of the complex for creating an environment that fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and teaching, and said the facility prepares SU to confront the revolutionary challenges and opportunities that have emerged in biology, chemistry, and the health sciences since the discovery of DNA. "As a university, we are suited for this work, deeply involved in discovery and innovation, and attuned to the broader implications," she said. "This complex has been designed so that people *can* bump into each other."

Visitors, ranging from international alumni to busloads of Central New York high school students, shared an eagerness to see the laboratories and classrooms, especially the rooftop greenhouse, which increases campus greenhouse capacity eight-fold and offers new capabilities for experimentation and research. "We can control the climate of each room, using air conditioning in one and reconfiguring the conditions of the Serengeti in another," biology professor David Alcoff said on a tour of the facility. "All access points are controlled, so pollen and insects can't get in or out. If you are working on something like transgenic corn or alfalfa, that's essential."



TAKE A TOUR

THE LIFE SCIENCES COMPLEX brings together the disciplines of biology, chemistry, and biochemistry under one roof for the first time in the University's history. Listen to student speaker **MaryAnn Danosos '09**, a biology and psychology major, share her perspective on the building at the dedication ceremony, and take a tour of the complex.



Soprano Laura Enslin, accompanied by the Syracuse University Brass Ensemble, performs the world premiere of "In Praise of Science," a musical piece the College of Arts and Sciences commissioned Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Robert Ward to create for the Life Sciences Complex dedication ceremony.