

Data Science Initiative Receives \$3 Million

A \$3 million commitment from University Trustee Tim Wentworth and his wife, Robin, will endow the directorship of the Institute for Data Science, part of a strategic priority to greatly expand the University's work in the burgeoning field of data science. As a centerpiece of the University's current five-year strategic plan and a top priority of the \$1.2 billion goal of *The Meliora Challenge*, the data science initiative features

the construction of a new building to house the institute, as well as support for new faculty members with expertise in the field.

The parents of a current Rochester student and an alumna, the Wentworths have also been key supporters of Raymond F. LeChase Hall, the new home of the Warner School of Education. The Wentworth Atrium in LeChase Hall is named in recognition of their support.



LEADING SUPPORTERS: Robin and Tim Wentworth

University Earns Reaccreditation

The University has earned reaccreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. One of six regional accrediting associations in the country, the commission every 10 years reviews member institutions to ensure compliance with standards of accreditation and characteristics of excellence in higher education.

As part of the process, the University completed an extensive institutional self-study, and members of the accreditation team interviewed trustees, University leaders, faculty, staff, and students.

A steering committee cochaired by Richard Feldman, dean of the College, and Donna Brink Fox, senior associate dean of academic and student affairs at the Eastman School, guided the effort.

The commission's report is available here: <http://www.rochester.edu/provost/middlestates/index.html>. The self-study can be read here: <http://internal.rochester.edu/provost/middlestates/SelfStudy.pdf>.

Business Incubator Moves Downtown

A University-affiliated program designed to help foster the growth of high-tech start-up companies is moving to the Sibley Building in downtown Rochester. The new \$24 million facility for High Tech Rochester (HTR)—the region's only state- and federally designated incubator—will serve as the cornerstone of the city's new innovation zone.

The new facility is possible due to support from New York State. In December, Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council initiative awarded HTR \$5 million, for a total of more than \$10 million over the last four years.

The funding will support the creation of the Finger Lakes Business Accelerator Cooperative,

which is led by HTR in partnership with RIT, Excell Partners, and the region's Small Business Development Centers and Industrial Development Agencies. The Center for Governmental Research projects the accelerator could create 1,000 jobs over the next five years. HTR will relocate to the facility when construction is completed next year.



INCUBATION: High Tech Rochester, a University-affiliated start-up incubator, will move to new space (shown here in an architect's rendering) in the former Sibley building in downtown Rochester.

College Access Innovator to Deliver Commencement Address

The founder of one of the country's most comprehensive college access and readiness programs for urban high school students is scheduled to deliver the 165th commencement address this spring.

Deborah Bial, the president of the Posse Foundation, will address the members of the College Class of 2015 during the Arts, Sciences & Engineering ceremony on May 17.

Founded in 1989 in New York City, the foundation sends cohorts of 10 high-achieving students together as a group to selective colleges and universities, including Rochester, where this year's freshman class included a cohort from the Washington, D. C., area.



Deborah Bial

Rochester committed full-tuition, merit scholarships to the students as part of the program.

An expert in education and leadership development, Bial has earned national recognition, including a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in 2007. Additional information about commencement activities is available at <http://www.rochester.edu/commencement>. The May ceremony will be webstreamed live.



GUEST: MLK speaker Khalil Gibran Muhammad meets with student leaders before the annual address.

MLK Speaker: History Is a 'Matter of Life and Death'

The nation should guard against turning the "unconventional" Martin Luther King Jr. into "a conventional legacy." That was a message from Khalil Gibran Muhammad, the director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, who delivered this year's Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Address.

A former member of the history faculty at Indiana University, Muhammad since 2011 has directed the Schomburg Center, an archive repository for information on people of African

descent worldwide. The author of *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, in which he explores the roots of the popular conception of black criminality in America, he has been widely called upon to discuss the lives of African-American men, including Trayvon Martin in Florida, Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, Eric Garner in New York City, and Tamir Rice in Cleveland, and others whose deaths have made national headlines.

In his speech, Muhammad said

that King's legacy is in danger of becoming "family-friendly programming of our history." He went on to ask, "Are Michael Brown and Eric Garner and Tamir Rice the harvest of our collective unwillingness to confront the past?" History, he noted, "is an essential tool of empowerment. It is a matter of life and death."

The culmination of a weeklong celebration of King's life and the kick-off for Black History Month, the address is cosponsored by the Office of Minority Student Affairs and the Office of the President.

Medical Center Names New Chief Financial Officer

A financial manager with more than three decades of experience in academic medicine is the new chief financial officer at the Medical Center.

David Kirshner, who is credited with engineering a financial turnaround at Boston's Children's Hospital, succeeds Michael Goonan, who retired in December. During a 15-year tenure at the primary pediatric teaching affiliate of the

Harvard Medical School, Kirshner worked to improve credit ratings and implement financial information systems to improve forecasting and productivity and to reduce operating costs.

Most recently a vice president at the health care company Valence Health, he also was the founding director of an Atlanta-based consultancy specializing in academic medical centers.



David Kirshner