COLUMBIA BESTS HARVARD

The Gary C. Comer Geochemistry Building was named R&D Daily's Lab of the Year, beating out Harvard's Northwest Science Building, which took second. Read more on page 5.

COLUMBIA’S SURPLUS FURNITURE HELPS NEEDY AROUND THE GLOBE

Last year, Columbia donated over 1,000 pieces of surplus furniture, totaling nearly 108,000 pounds, from Faculty House, Ruggles Hall, East Campus and Wien Hall. All of the used furniture went to economic relief efforts in Jamaica and Honduras. Read more on page 7.
Dear [Catherine] Sanders,

Now that our floor, wall, and bathroom renovations are complete, I wanted to write a note expressing our pleasure with the results. We were very impressed with the quality workmanship and professional manner of Mamais Contracting Corp. Their attention to detail and thorough preparation did not go unnoticed. We also appreciated their efforts to keep the general disturbances associated with any renovation work to a minimum. Additionally, the Mamais administrative officers were polite and organized. Thank you again for coordinating everything and for being so attentive.

Sincerely,

Christine Rojas
University Apartment Housing Tenant

Dear Anthony [Nasser],

I just wanted to let you know how pleased we are with the service we’ve received from Doug Jermyn, our superintendent, and Jose Barcia, who performs our annual inspection.

Doug is always responsive to the school’s needs and quickly repairs what needs to be done, or refers us for work that requires an electrician, etc. I am at The Family Annex for five years and can always count on Doug for solutions to the problems we encounter.

Jose Barcia has also been responsive to our needs for a report on the condition of the paint. We are in the process of going for accreditation and need to demonstrate that we are a lead free environment. Jose has been extremely thorough through the years that I have served as Director and we appreciate his professionalism and thoroughness.

Regards,

Nancy Drescher
The Family Annex, Director

Dear Matthew [Early], Deirdre [Chong] and Dave [Dewhurst],

I just wanted to say a heartfelt thank you from the female residents of Dodge Hall for the installation of the lovely new heater/cooler unit in the bathroom on 4—instead of bracing ourselves for the inevitable freezing cold bathoom visit today, we were delighted to discover that it is now a fully functioning and heated space—a miracle.

Thank you all for your efforts on our behalf—and I know that the students will appreciate your work when they return next week

Barbara Batcheler
School of the Arts

Dear Joe [Ienuso],

We remain thrilled by our new home~THANK YOU!

I want to make a point of recording our special thanks for three persons who brought us from the precipice to a very successful move. Many of our staff have commented on how seamless the process seemed to them—they don’t know the half of it!

So here they are:
Jo Donna Lamb—she is our hero. I began to think she was living in the Center. She never wavered, she never disappeared. She was always there and calm, answering questions, pushing and prodding. Her presence gave us confidence and her pushing made it happen.

Ed Lauth—he was a great resource and we are especially grateful for his mobilization of his staff. We know he will get the job done.

Chris Lauritano from Central Movers—we had a few tense moments, but once we moved past them Chris was a dogged presence, adapting to the changing daily circumstances and always focused on moving us successfully.

Our move team was spectacular, but they could not have accomplished their work without the partnership of those key individuals.

Gratefully,

Frederick M. Van Sickle
Vice President for University Development

Dear Mark [Kerman],

I just wanted to make sure that I tell you what a good job Dragos Suis did as Acting Superintendent of 44 Morningside Drive over the summer. Dragos really went the extra mile while here. Our new superintendent is also wonderful.

I hope Dragos’ success continues and all is going well at the new Riverdale complex.

Sharyn O’Halloran
George Blumenthal Professor of Political Economy and Professor of International and Public Affairs
Department of Political Science

Dear Cathy [Ryder],

I may have forgotten to thank you amid the rush to finish last year and then all the holiday visits. Please accept my apology for the delay.

Monika and I were very pleased by the cooperation and services rendered by Frank and Mel; they were responsive at all points along the way. We are pleased by the outcome and are quite happy to find a place for our suitcases and clothes and almost all the books…. We are still working to solve the latter, of course.

You were extremely helpful, as you know, in your interventions and resolving an impasse that was frustrating and not productive. Because of your help, we find ourselves in a remarkably better place than 4 months ago. It makes a huge difference to the experience of coming to Columbia.

Pleased be assured of our gratitude for your assistance. Let me know if I may be of help to you in the future.

Our best wishes,

Bruce Kogut
Sanford C. Bernstein & Co Professor of Leadership and Ethics
Columbia Business School

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Jo Donna Lamb—she is our hero. I began to think she was living in the Center. She never wavered, she never disappeared. She was always there and calm, answering questions, pushing and prodding. Her presence gave us confidence and her pushing made it happen.
In our business – even though we spend much of our time planning – it’s not unusual for us to deal with unexpected events. Just recently, for example, a fire broke out in the kitchen space of one of our retail tenants and necessitated the temporary evacuation of one of our nearby university residential buildings. A cross-functional team of Facilities personnel responded immediately with professionalism, care and efficiency to help minimize the impact to the building occupants. Remarkable team efforts like these help us get through difficult circumstances.

Similarly, during these unusually challenging economic times, I am encouraged by our ability to work together as a team to create and deliver solutions and I know that collectively we have the talent, dedication and skill to help us get through these challenges.

In the course of these unprecedented times, we have still succeeded in performing outstanding work as an organization. As we welcome spring, let’s take a moment to look back on some of our many accomplishments this past winter.

On December 17, 2008, we celebrated the “topping off” of the new Northwest Corner Building at Broadway and West 120th Street (more on page 4). This traditional milestone takes us one step closer towards having a center for collaborative research and marks the completion of the main campus’ northwest corner, 113 years after its formation.

As one Columbia science building goes up, another is winning awards. In February, the Gary C. Comer Geochemistry Building at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory was named R&D Daily’s “Lab of the Year” (more on page 5), and more recently won a top research project award from the Greater New York Construction User Council. Congratulations to everyone who worked on this project.

As construction continues on campus, a few projects were successfully completed. The Journalism School welcomed the new Stabile Student Center and its accompanying café, utilizing 8,000 square feet of previously unused exterior space and fulfilling the school’s need for designated space for social engagements, study, and events (more on page 4).

Similarly, Jerome L. Greene Hall received two major additions—a 9th floor on top of its existing structure and new air handling units (AHUs). The new 9th floor added 29 faculty offices as well as two conference areas for law school faculty and students, while the new units upgrade the HVAC system significantly and use less energy for the heating and cooling of the building (more on page 4). In each of these projects, we have focused on building responsibly, an initiative we continued to further by hosting the Clean Construction Workshop on January 28, 2009 (more on page 6).

In addition to our collective achievements, this edition of our newsletter spotlights two of our team members who have demonstrated outstanding work. Jim Verdicchio, assistant director, Investigations and Technology, recently helped to apprehend a suspect in several on campus thefts. Jim fulfills our commitment to keep the Columbia community safe and was honored for his work during a public safety awards ceremony in February (page 9). Like Jim, Boubacar Maiga, director of custodial services, has also demonstrated a strong commitment to Columbia. Boubacar has spent a decade working in Facilities and leveraging his specialties as a public servant (page 11).

Boubacar talks about his ability to rely on Don Schlosser, assistant vice president for Campus Operations for guidance - a model for how we should rely on each other. We can’t do our jobs without depending on each other, across our many groups and within our divisions. It is only when we work together and seek out each other’s expertise that we can fully serve our clients, enhance their experience, and succeed together.

Joe Ienuso
Northwest Corner Building Topped Off

On December 17, 2008, Columbia University observed the “topping off” of its new Northwest Corner Building at Broadway and West 120th Street, designed by José Rafael Moneo of Spain. Below, Joe Ienuso, Executive Vice President of Columbia University Facilities, Lee Bollinger, President of Columbia University, and Charlie Murphy, Senior Vice President of Turner Construction Company take turns signing the final beam…which was then hoisted to its resting place atop the 14-story structure.

The Journalism School Welcomes New Stabile Student Center

The skylights contain glass from Mexico. The glazing for the operable door is from China, while the door frame and motor are from Argentina. Like the diverse population of The Journalism School itself, these are just some of the remarkable features of The J-School’s new Stabile Student Center.

Occupying approximately 8,000 square feet of previously unused exterior space between Furnald Hall and Journalism Hall, the new center and its accompanying café fulfills The J-School’s need for designated space for social engagements, study, and events. Students and faculty can now enjoy the natural lighting and view through the center’s glass enclosure or, weather permitting, fresh air from its large, double-hung window.

The student center’s unique design challenged the project team with the conversion of a set exterior space into something useable and dynamic. In doing so, Joe Mannino, the project director, Structure Tone, the construction company, and Marble Fairbanks, the architects, had to build within and around fully occupied buildings. Building-wide shut downs, such as water and electric, had to be scheduled and performed around occupants’ needs. In addition, there were anxious moments in which glass panels had to be lifted—twice—from Broadway, between Furnald Hall and the School of Journalism. All the nerve-wracking moments were worth the end result—a large space for multipurpose usage.

The Stabile Student Center was completed in September 2008. It is the second phase in the Journalism School’s renovation, which was preceded by interior upgrades of the school’s 100, 200, and 600 levels in 2007. The center is a major gift from Antoinette “Toni” Stabile and the Vincent A. Stabile Foundation.

“It has been my pleasure to help create these new spaces at Columbia’s Journalism School,” says Stabile. “A great school deserves a great facility, and I’m happy to do what I can to help achieve this goal.”
Exhibit Showcases Sixth Graders’ Photographs and Prose About Manhattanville

Manhattanville: On the Cusp of Change, an exhibit about Manhattanville/West Harlem designed and created by sixth-grade students, opened at PS 161, 499 West 133rd Street, on Thursday, January 29th. The exhibit opening was free and open to the public.

In their exhibit, the students present photographs, interviews, and writing that document their neighborhood. As part of their ongoing two-and-a-half year study of architecture -- sponsored by the Center for Architecture Foundation program Learning by Design: New York, the sixth graders spent the fall of 2008 learning about the history and architecture of Manhattanville. They researched documents, maps, and photographs; they conducted neighborhood walks and interviews; and documented the area of the proposed expansion plan through photography and writing. Additionally, the students attended a special presentation on the expansion plan at Columbia University, hosted by the Office of Government and Community Affairs. This presentation enabled the students to learn about the university and to formulate their own opinions.

In creating Manhattanville: On the Cusp of Change, the sixth-grade students of PS 161 took on many curatorial roles, from the selection and sizing of their photographs to the writing of captions and introductory text to the arrangement of the poster boards. The resulting exhibit highlights the historical and cultural significance of the neighborhood and is an important opportunity for the young people of Manhattanville/West Harlem to voice their opinions about the changes it will undergo in the next two decades.

Courtesy PS 161

COLUMBIA BESTS HARVARD

Gary C. Comer Geochemistry Building named R&D Daily’s Lab of the Year

The results are in and we have a winner! But that hasn’t always been the case. What is interesting about the Lab of the Year competition, which has been held for the past 43 years, is that the demanding criteria does not guarantee that the field of entries will produce a winner. Projects that win the top awards (Lab of the Year, Renovated Lab of the Year) are architecturally distinguished facilities whose overall design quality is recognized by the judges. They do not need to be massive or costly, but they must represent high quality design and fulfillment of their primary mission.

There are more than 30 different characteristics that the judges evaluate these labs for including Siting, Planning, Flow of materials and people, Plant Operation, Aesthetics, Working Conditions, Energy Efficiency, and Cost to Build/Operate. Meeting all of these characteristics simultaneously is not an easy job for the architects and engineers. As a result, judges have decided not to award the Lab of the Year award three times (1979, 1983, and 2008) because no entry for that year met all of those demanding criteria.

But this year, the penultimate Lab of the Year award was justly given to the 70,000 square-foot Gary C. Comer Geochemistry Building on the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory Campus of Columbia Univ. in Palisades, N.Y.

Officially completed in late 2007, the building houses extensive lab space directly supporting R&D that advances our understanding of climate change. Positioned dramatically overlooking the Hudson River, it supports numerous specialized mass spectroscopy, geochemistry, and instrument-based labs.

Designed by Payette of Boston, the building is cleverly camouflaged to minimize its visual impact on such an exposed setting, while providing an abundance of natural light and invigorating river valley views while deftly addresses the practical needs of a high technology laboratory.

In addition the overall winner, High Honors went to one deserving laboratory. Designed for flexibility, the Northwest Science Building, Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Mass. features an open floor plan that stresses the cross-disciplinary nature of the occupants. Instead of being dedicated to specific departments, the office and lab space is demarcated according to groups of faculty which share similar research interests. Designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP, the building will combine scientists in neuroscience, systems biology, and genomics.

(Courtesy R&D Daily)
Columbia Hosts Clean Construction Workshop to Combat Diesel Emissions

In today’s construction industry, the need for cleaner diesel operations is becoming increasingly apparent. As part of an effort to educate colleges and universities about strategies, tools, and incentives for reducing diesel emissions, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Columbia University Facilities teamed to host a College and University Clean Construction Workshop on January 28, 2009.

Executive Vice President of Columbia University Facilities Joe Ienuso welcomed participants to the full-day event and spoke about the need for responsible building in New York City. “We want to use all the best technologies to do work in an effective way, and we need to push and encourage each other to do the right thing,” said Ienuso.

George Pavlou, EPA’s Acting Regional Administrator, noted the timeliness of the event as an answer to President Obama’s call for reduced greenhouse gas emissions. He also led the day’s discussion on the adverse health effects of diesel exhaust and the necessity of using alternative energy.

Five information sessions were held throughout the day, each featuring a moderator and group of panelists. Topics ranged from the use of cleaner fuels to diesel retrofit technology. Andrew Darrell, vice president of Living Cities at the Environmental Defense Fund, discussed case studies of successful implementation of clean diesel emission reduction projects at colleges and universities. Among the critical success factors for these projects is the need to walk the site, know your equipment, and not be afraid to fail.

Ramesh Raman, executive director of Construction Field Compliance for Columbia University’s Manhattanville Development, served as a panelist. Under his leadership, Columbia’s new mixed-use campus in Manhattanville will be a model for green urban development. Raman was joined by Philip Pitruzzello, vice president for Columbia University Manhattanville Development, who concluded the day’s sessions.

Pitruzzello spoke about the use of clean diesel in all phases of Manhattanville’s construction and how this will be put into practice over the next 20 years. “Our plan incorporates smart growth and a number of green building design principles,” said Pitruzzello. “Our construction equipment will use new, cleaner diesel engines; ultra-low sulfur diesel; and a high-efficiency verified particulate filter in the exhaust. This is in line with our commitment to reduce emissions by 30% by 2017 as part of Mayor Bloomberg’s PlaNYC.”

Columbia has committed to design its new campus in accordance with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) Rating System. LEED-ND integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into the first national system for neighborhood design.

Five other of Columbia’s capital projects are candidates for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, including the Gary C. Comer Geochemistry Building at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Faculty House, Columbia Alumni Center, Northwest Corner Building, and Knox Hall.
Columbia’s Surplus Furniture Helps Needy Around the Globe

Last year, kitchen equipment weighing in at 14.75 tons was trucked away from Columbia University’s Faculty House, a first step in the building’s gut renovation.

The 167 pieces of equipment were unloaded in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where they’ve become the heart of another educational endeavor – training in commercial cooking at a new trade school in this economically and educationally disadvantaged area. The school will be open to students of all ages and, besides the cooking program, focus on skills training in computers, plumbing and bricklaying, says Dan Carpenter, founder of World in Need, a sponsor of the school.

While the lead time for this kind of effort would normally be months, it came to pass at Faculty House in a matter of days because of outstanding teamwork among project managers and demolition workers from Sciame Construction Company, members of Columbia University Facilities, Environmental Stewardship and Housing & Dining Departments, and personnel from Institution Recycling Network, a surplus property management company that was the conduit between Columbia and the charitable receiving organization, World in Need. IRN, based in Concord, N.H., collects property from organizations that would otherwise be discarding large amounts of surplus goods.

“In 2008, we loaded more than 63,000 items from projects like this one, equaling more than five million pounds of relief supplies,” said Mark Berry, IRN surplus program manager. “These were distributed through IRN’s network of nonprofit partner organizations to recipients in eighteen countries world-wide as well as eleven U.S. states. The participation and support of Columbia University was instrumental in this terrific success story.”

Columbia University Facilities is spearheading efforts to make Columbia a model environmental citizen. Below are some recent efforts to reduce energy consumption, limit our greenhouse gas emissions and incorporate environmental and energy enhancements in new construction projects.

“In addition to environmental and social benefits, it is usually less expensive to manage surplus for reuse rather than recycling or disposal,” said Matt Early, Vice President of Operations for Columbia University Facilities.

The Faculty House project was just the first step in a growing relationship between Columbia and IRN. The company has been hired for construction waste management at the Manhattanville site, and last year, Columbia donated over 1,000 pieces of surplus furniture, totaling nearly 108,000 pounds, from Faculty House, Ruggles Hall, East Campus and Wien Hall. All of the used furniture went to economic relief efforts in Jamaica and Honduras.
The 2008-2009 academic year ushered in a few upgrades for Columbia University’s law school students, faculty and staff as Jerome Greene Hall received two major additions—a 9th floor on top of its existing structure and new air handling units (AHUs).

The 9th floor addition has created much needed space for the law school, adding 29 new faculty offices as well as two conference areas for faculty and students. The conference rooms, including the Sidley Austin Room which has eye-catching views of southern and eastern New York City, will support a range of activities, from seminars and lectures to student organization meetings and social functions. The new offices support Dean David Schizer’s strategic initiative to expand the law school’s faculty by 50 percent, thereby reducing the student-faculty ratio and broaden subjects available to students.

By building vertically, the addition is a “green” solution for the Law School’s space needs, as the new interior space was created out of its previously unoccupied exterior. With the 9th floor’s completion, new, winterized AHUs were installed on the newly constructed rooftop to condition and circulate air as part of the HVAC system. These new units replaced older, more inefficient units, so in addition to upgrading the HVAC system significantly, they will use less energy to heat and cool the building.

Although there were challenges working in a fully occupied building, such as performing building-wide water and electric shut downs around occupants’ needs, the project team successfully completed their work.

“Thanks to close coordination between the law school and our team, we were able to extend elevator, electrical, and HVAC services to the 9th floor without interrupting the day-to-day operations within the school,” said Facilities Director of Programs Doug McKean. His project team included Michael Lenihan (Columbia University Facilities project manager), Sciame (construction managers), Paul Segal Associates (architects), ARUP (engineer), and Dometech (commissioning agent).

The expansion project is the first major structural addition to Jerome Greene Hall since the 1995-96 addition to the 116th Street entrance of the three-story skylit lobby, which contains Drapkin Lounge, a quiet area for students to study or convene, and Lenfest Café, a modern dining space complete with an outdoor terrace. Jerome Greene Hall had previously undergone only minor renovations since it opened in 1960.
Public Safety Recognizes Columbians Dedicated to Protecting our Campuses

The Columbia University Facilities Department of Public Safety recognized various members of their staff for outstanding dedication and commitment to protecting Columbia’s campuses at their annual Promotion, Awards & Recognition Ceremony on February 25, 2009 in Low Library.

Director of Investigations and Technology Projects Ken Finnegan served as the Master of Ceremonies for the event, during which Public Safety staff members received promotions and awards for perfect attendance and outstanding service.

Highlights included the presentation of the Ricardo Morales Crime Prevention Award to Patrol Captain Delano Steele for his ability to encourage student participation in crime prevention, and the recognition of Senior Administrative Coordinator Mary Dooley for her 25 years of service to the University. Nearly 30 perfect attendance awards were also given out, with special mention to Security Officers Michael Layne and Wilmer Martinez, both of whom have maintained perfect attendance streaks for eight consecutive years. Honorees also included Joyce Jackson, University Resident Halls’ executive director; Cristen S. Scully Kromm, Student Affairs’ assistant dean of community development/director of residential programs; and Jose Pagan, Facilities Campus Operations’ groundskeeper B for their outstanding service.

During a somber moment in the ceremony, the family of Garry Germain, a Columbia security officer who was killed in line of duty 20 years ago, received a plaque in memory of Garry’s sacrifice for the University.

“Garry Germain’s ultimate sacrifice reminds us everyday that public safety is inherently dangerous,” said Vice President of Public Safety Jim McShane. “That’s why I feel especially privileged to be here today, to help honor all of you, the men and women who keep our campus and neighborhood one of the safest in the city.”

Suspect Apprehended by Department of Public Safety

On Monday, February 9, 2009, a male suspect was apprehended by members of Columbia University Public Safety and turned over to the New York Police Department (NYPD) after several reports were received for thefts taking place in Mudd, Jerome Greene Law School, and Dodge Gym on January 26 and 27, 2009. Video review from surveillance cameras further identified the man’s appearance on these dates, and a Public Safety alert was distributed.

Jim Verdicchio, Assistant Director, Investigations and Technology, observed the suspect on West 116th Street between Amsterdam Avenue and Morningside Drive and notified the Investigations Office. He received backup from Public Safety’s Senior Investigator Brian Tseseyman, Assistant Director Jorge Farina, and Manager of Crime Prevention Programs Ricardo Morales. The suspect was apprehended, without incident, near the steps of Kent Hall on Columbia’s College Walk.

A post apprehension interview with the suspect revealed that he had been visiting the Morningside campus on a regular basis and used stolen identification. He admitted to at least 12 laptop thefts and provided additional information to the NYPD. Follow-up with complainants and notifications have been made by the Investigations Unit.

As evident by this recent arrest, the Department of Public Safety works very hard, day in and day out, to fulfill their commitment to keep the Columbia community safe. Public Safety’s investigators use their wealth of experience and partnership with local law enforcement as well as up-to-date technologies to fully serve the public. Students, employees, and guests are encouraged to report criminal incidents, accidents, and other emergencies promptly to the Department of Public Safety Operations Centers at the Morningside campus or Medical Center.
**NEW FACES AT FACILITIES**

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<tr>
<td>Victor Chin</td>
<td>Director, Capital Finance</td>
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<td>Seema Datwani</td>
<td>Manager Finance &amp; Administration</td>
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<td>William George Edwards, Jr.</td>
<td>Sergeant Public Safety - Morningside</td>
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<td>Yelena Goldenberg</td>
<td>Assistant Project Manager Real Estate</td>
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<td>Alberto Tapia</td>
<td>Handy Person C Residential Operations</td>
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<td>Phillip Veet</td>
<td>CAD System Manager Public Safety - Morningside</td>
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**NEW ROLES**

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<tr>
<td>Brian Brady</td>
<td>Investigator Public Safety – CUMC</td>
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<td>Jolyon Handler</td>
<td>Director, Project Administration Finance &amp; Administration</td>
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<td>Theodore Johnson</td>
<td>Lieutenant Public Safety – CUMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Mosgrove</td>
<td>Assistant Watch Engineer Plant Engineering &amp; Utilities</td>
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**SILVER SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES**

Congratulations to the following on their 25th anniversary at Columbia!

- McPhail Simon
  - Mechanic
  - Campus Operations

**FUTURE FACES AT FACILITIES**

- Jo Donna Lamb, project manager, Capital Project Management, and her husband welcomed their son, Gabriel, on February 5, 2009.

**LEED AP**

Congratulations to the following for recently passing the LEED Accredited Professional (LEED AP) exam. LEED APs have demonstrated a thorough understanding of green building practices and principles and the LEED Rating System.

- Shella Cadet
  - New Construction

- Frank Giannelli
  - Commercial Interiors

- Fanny Gong
  - New Construction

- Ed Lauth
  - Operations & Maintenance

- Keith Pettey
  - New Construction
A Decade Later: Boubacar Maiga Reflects on His Years at Facilities

“Facilities is my home. It’s been my home for about 9 or 10 years,” says Boubacar Maiga, director of custodial services, marveling at the amount of time he has spent working at Columbia University Facilities.

Originally from Niger, West Africa, Boubacar speaks French, English, and Spanish fluently and can read and write in those three languages. He received a law degree in 1985, and in 1987, he moved to New York, where he worked in several law firms as a paralegal. He explains, “Since I studied within the French system, I was unable to practice as a lawyer, but I was working.” Still, there was something missing. Boubacar wanted to do more public service.

Although he knew he was overqualified to start again in a new field, Boubacar decided to do just that and began working in the private sector. Upon hearing from a friend about careers at Columbia, he decided to pursue a cleaning position within Facilities. It was in 1999 when Boubacar first joined the Facilities team at Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC), as a cleaner and member of Transport Workers Union of America (TWU). He would spend three years at that position before he was sought out to work within Facilities’ Campus Operations, attending to the needs of the Morningside Campus’ science buildings. It was only about a year and a half later, when he was asked to tend to other academic buildings. Nine months after that, when his skills were once again needed, he was invited to work the evening shift at Lerner Hall.

It would take just another year before Boubacar’s talents were sought out for management. He was promoted to assistant manager for the evening and overnight shifts before, a year later, being promoted again to director of custodial services. “To go from an entry level cleaner position to a director of the department is a pretty significant accomplishment,” Boubacar reflects objectively. “I am really appreciative and proud of this achievement.”

Boubacar decided to strengthen his skills by pursuing studies at the University. In 2007, he graduated with a master's degree in public administration from the School of International Studies (SIPA), and in 2008, he received a certificate in Business Excellence, a customized version of an executive MBA, from Columbia Business School.

Naturally, juggling a 24/7 operation and a family life that includes five kids, ages 2-15, was a challenge, but Boubacar was able to successfully work through this. “It was difficult but worth it,” he humbly explains. “I was given a great opportunity, so I had to align all the aspects in my life and not have each impact the other, which is tough to do.” These aspects include managing a cleaning staff of almost 200 people assigned to all of the academic buildings and overseeing the planning, cleaning, and set-up of University events, including Commencement.

Together the Facilities Custodial Services team (a division within Campus Operations) keeps each academic building clean and functional, even during trying situations. Boubacar recalls a recent flooding incident in Sehermerhorn Extension, in which the entire custodial team responded efficiently and professionally to help control the crisis situation. “The team’s professionalism and quick response helped to make what could have been a worse situation relatively effortless,” he says. The team’s quick response was similarly beneficial during the city’s black outs in 2003 and 2006, a time in which Boubacar notes that “the staff persevered and showed amazing dedication to this great institution.”

The Custodial Services department is available around the clock, a feat that Boubacar credits to his team’s hard work. He says, “I have very solid support from both my staff and management team, and I am very grateful to them for all that we have accomplished with this department.” In addition to his team, Boubacar gives praise to Don Schlosser, Assistant Vice President for Campus Operations, for “how tremendous he has helped me grow as a manager and as a leader.” Boubacar continues, “Don has always made his experience and leadership available to me, and I am very grateful for that. He understands my challenges and has always had the right formula for me to go through crises. I have learned a lot from him, and he keeps guiding me to take the right steps.”

In looking back at the last decade, Boubacar marvels at the many personal and group milestones. He has seen Facilities evolve from a decentralized to a centralized operation, a change he believes made it more streamlined and efficient, and he looks forward to the department’s continued growth. Boubacar says, “I’m a public servant in every aspect of what I do each day. That’s our role in Facilities. Everyone depends heavily on us to have this place cleaned, so they can be able to do their own work. Our work is challenging, but it is exciting. We’ve been able to enhance the way that people work, and together, we’ve accomplished a lot.”
Cheap Eats
With everyone looking to save these days, spending less on food is a great way to keep more money in your pocket. On those days when brown bagging isn’t an option, check out these cheaper options in the area.

ASIA KAN
Located on 95th and Amsterdam, Asia Kan is a bit far from campus, but their delivery is usually fast. All of their lunch specials are $8 (the Chicken Pad Thai is a personal favorite) and come with BOTH miso soup and a salad.

SLICEBUN
Slicebun's menu says it has “pizza, burgers and much more.” It’s true; you can also get sandwiches, gyros, pasta, salads, platters and sides. But the pizza special - $4 for two slices and a drink – might be your best bet.

TAQUERIA Y FONDA LA MEXICANA
This is a great authentic Mexican place. Try the tacos, tamales or tostadas, all around $3 each. Their chips with salsa is a treat at $2.50.

OLLIE’S
Lunch specials average $6.50 and come with your choice of soup and rice. But the thing that differentiates Ollie’s is how fast your food is delivered. The other day, we ordered food at 2:14 p.m. and it was delivered to us at 2:20 p.m. We’re not joking. We’re not sure if that’s remarkable or frightening - you decide.

MORNING TO MIDNIGHT
In the mood for sushi? M2M’s sushi rolls start as low at $3.50. Pop over to this asian supermarket on Broadway and 115th for other goodies, too, such as the daifuku mochi rice cakes.

PINO’S
Pino’s Café, on 125th and Amsterdam, has great paninis, wraps and salads. For $5.50, you can pick any two between a 1/2 sandwich, soup or garden salad. Cheap AND healthy!

ROTI ROLL
Craving Indian? At Roti Roll on 110th and Broadway, you can get a Frankie, Mubai’s version of a wrap for $4-6. Choose from shrimp, chicken, lamb, cheese or potato mixed with other spices in a delicious buttery wrap. For a treat try the Hot Aloo Fries.

Question of the Month
What is your favorite spot near campus for a cheap lunch?

Gerald Scott
Heavy Cleaner
Campus Operations
“University Market has a nice lunch buffet where you can get various types of foods for just $5.50…a great deal!”

Shirley Wright
Secretary II
Residential Operations
“Carmines has really good food and great lunch specials.”

Don Eggleton
Project Manager
Capital Project Management
“I wouldn’t exactly know; I bring my lunch from home just about every day.”

SPRING HOLIDAYS
May 25, 2009 (Memorial Day)