I write to report on McGill’s recent accomplishments and our plans for the immediate future. In the year since I tabled my last report to the community, we have made remarkable progress. Indeed, 2007-08 has been a dynamic year: the prestigious international Kyoto Prize and Gairdner Award going to McGill professors, McGill’s new Life Sciences Complex completed, four new student Olympians, including a bronze medallist, international conferences on genocide and on Canadian cultural identity, major research contributions ranging from understanding the link between premature birth and autism to Canada’s first cloned pigs, the Martlets’ first national hockey championship, the launch of Campaign McGill, landmark gifts to support students, our first-ever Parents Weekend, which attracted more than 600 parents from across the world, and the development of new international partnerships, among many other highlights.

As a public institution, it is vital that we are accountable to the public by committing ourselves to achieving excellence in all we do. We have made extraordinary strides in realizing McGill’s mission, but we cannot be complacent. We face steep competition and some serious obstacles. If we are not aware of our weaknesses, as well as our strengths, we will be less strategic in leveraging our significant assets. Much remains to be done: to ensure our programs rank with the best anywhere; to optimally support our students’ needs both academically and in their career choices; to generate the resources our professors deserve for their vital teaching and research; to reach out effectively to our community and our world. We are striving to be the best we can, because the mission of McGill is so important and our history, our people and our potential, so extraordinary. Indeed, McGill is a wonderful place, uniquely combining outstanding people, valuable diversity and deep community engagement.
A Distinctive Community

Canada’s strong and differentiated university system gives its students a great range of options, and each type of institution plays an important role—socially and economically. The talent and knowledge stemming from our regional universities primarily, though not only, serve to strengthen local communities, while our top research universities advance our cities and country on the national and international stages. McGill is, has always been and will always be a national treasure in Canada’s system of higher education, a powerful contributor to our country’s strengths, and an institution with a profound international reputation and impact.

Quality. Your students are the brightest in Canada, winning more prestigious national awards per capita than their peers. McGill has nurtured 128 Rhodes Scholars, the most of any Canadian university. And our students routinely round out their academic achievements through athletics and university and community service. To date, McGill has produced 1,526 Academic All-Canadians, who achieved an average of at least 80 per cent while participating in a Canadian Interuniversity Sport—again the most nationally. This year, our outstanding McGill faculty again took home many prestigious international and national prizes.

Diversity. McGill’s students, faculty and staff come from every corner of Quebec, Canada and the world, bringing with them a broad array of backgrounds. The composition of our student body is unique: deeply rooted in Quebec, yet also pan-Canadian and international. More than 53 per cent of our students hail from Quebec, approximately one-quarter are from the rest of Canada, and 19 per cent from about 160 countries, in this year alone. We have the highest percentage of international students of any Canadian university, and the second-highest percentage of international undergraduates in North America. Of the 834 new professors joining McGill since 2000, nearly 60 per cent have been recruited from distinguished universities and research institutes outside Canada.

All this fosters unparalleled richness of learning, social and research experiences, and a truly global experience and outlook. Our international students and faculty, and our almost 200,000 living alumni in 180 countries, feel a loyal connection to Montreal and Canada, because of the warmth of their ties to McGill. These ties create opportunities for Canadians to participate in distinguished intellectual, research, business, artistic, government and cultural collaborations worldwide. McGill’s unique reputation brings prominence to Quebec and Canada.

Community. All of this reflects the strong sense of community felt by McGill students, faculty, staff and alumni. “McGillians” are proud of their institution and of our collective accomplishments—and we should be. I have never met alumni who are so loyal to their institution. They are our fiercest champions. The shared intellectual engagement and strong collegiality of our members is a primary reason, I believe, why McGill has been so successful in undertaking pioneering interdisciplinary research and study. We are all working on the same team, we know no intellectual or territorial boundaries, and this encourages interdisciplinary exploration through a sense of common cause.

Faculty Prizes and Awards

• In June 2008, McGill professor emeritus Charles Taylor, one of the most accomplished philosophers of our time, a leading thinker on spirituality and secularism, became the first Canadian to win the coveted Kyoto Prize in the category of Arts and Philosophy.
• Nahum Sonenberg, James McGill Professor of Biochemistry, garnered a prestigious Gairdner International Award, often referred to as a “mini-Nobel,” which is given to the world’s best medical scientists. The 2008 Award recognized Sonenberg’s groundbreaking work on protein synthesis.
• Margaret Lock, Marjorie Bronfman Professor Emerita in Social Studies in Medicine and Anthropology, was awarded the 2007 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Gold Medal for Achievement in Research for her work on the social, political and moral implications of emerging biocultural knowledge and associated technologies.
• The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) named Dr. Michael Reed, Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Immunology and a researcher at the Montreal General, as Canada’s Premier Young Researcher for his work on tuberculosis.
• James McGill Professor Michael McGeary, of McGill’s Douglas Mental Health University Institute and the Department of Psychiatry, and Neurology and Neurosurgery, won the inaugural Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) Lougheed Prize.
• Graham Bell, James McGill Professor in the Department of Biology, was named one of three finalists for Canada’s most prestigious science award, the $1-million Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering.
• Mark Weinberg, Director of the McGill AIDS Centre of the Sir Mortimer B. Davis–Jewish General Hospital, was named a Chevalier of France’s Légion d’honneur for his exceptional work on HIV/AIDS and for strengthening scientific collaboration between France and Canada.
• Geography post-doctoral fellow James Ford received a Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Young Innovator Award, which recognizes young researchers who have successfully transferred their innovative research to a business, process, or service to benefit society at large.
• Neuroscientist Edith Harnel, astrophysicist Victoria Kopi and plant science professor Donald Smith all received awards from L’Acfas (Association francophone pour le savoir) in Fall 2007.

Thanks to the Cundill Foundation, led by McGill alumnus Peter Cundill, history scholars across the world have been given a spectacular new opportunity to have their work recognized. The $75,000 Cundill International Prize and Lecture in History at McGill, the world’s largest non-fiction historical literature prize, will be awarded to an author who has published a book determined to have had a profound literary, social and academic impact on the subject.

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We can all note with pride that, again this year, national and international rankings have recognized McGill’s distinctive quality and contributions. The distinguished London-based Times Higher Education Supplement–QS World University Rankings, which emphasize the quality and impact of teaching and research, the employability of graduates and international diversity, recently ranked McGill as North America’s top public university and 12th internationally. McGill is the only Canadian institution situated among the top 25 universities in the world, four years running. Our rank and score in the 2008 Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings improved more than any Canadian university. Again this year, we were named Canada’s top medical-doctoral university by Maclean’s magazine.

McGillians bask in the sun on the lush downtown campus.
Student Life and Learning

From the moment I arrived at McGill in January of 2003, I have been impressed by the University’s remarkable students. Their brilliance, dedication to community service and to global well-being, their thoughtfulness and entrepreneurial spirit inspire our efforts to provide the best possible environment to engage them fully and to nurture their talents.

I believe McGill can and must be both a great research university and profoundly student-centred—these characteristics should complement each other. Unfortunately, at most research-intensive universities, this is not the norm. The fact that all McGill faculty engage in both teaching and research is a distinctive strength of our institution. At McGill, we are working hard to ensure our undergraduate students as well as our graduate students and post-doctoral fellows are beneficiaries of the rich research that takes place here—and we are succeeding. For example, McGill School of Environment student Sophine Johnson travelled to Abisko in Sweden this summer to help research the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere from northern water systems.

The street runs both ways: The energy, experiences and fresh ideas of students also create an exciting environment for professors. We have more to do in this regard. We aim to provide every undergraduate, professional and graduate student with strong research exposure.

This year, academic, administrative and support staff across the University have been implementing the recommendations of my Principal’s Task Force on Student Life and Learning, published in late 2006. We are working to create the best conditions for students to excel—academically, personally and in their future endeavours.

And our alumni and friends are throwing their support behind this effort. In October 2007, two long-time friends of McGill, Senator Michael A. Meighen, BA’60, and his wife, Kelly, provided a $5-million gift earmarked to strengthen services to students. Continuing a decades-long tradition of volunteer work for McGill, Senator Meighen currently serves as a co-chair of Campaign McGill and member of the Board of Governors.

Enhancing Academic Advising and Mentoring. Generous gifts from the Meighens and other supporters are helping us to move toward our goal of providing high-quality academic advising and mentoring across every faculty and department of the University. Advisers assist students in making informed choices in light of their learning, career and life goals. Consultations with the McGill community have identified our greatest advising needs. Led by Dean of Students Jane Everett, we are developing workshops for undergraduate advisers and graduate supervisors. New academic advising websites will be launched this fall to provide online resources for students and advisers.

Cutting Red Tape. For a range of reasons, McGill students have often had to spend far too much time navigating bureaucracy and struggling to find essential information. Though much remains to be improved, we are beginning to simplify and enhance communication.

• In McGill’s first Cut the Red Tape contest, 10 students and staff won prizes for their solutions to problems ranging from redundant forms to complicated course-approval paths.

• An integrated service model, with a single point of contact for students, is under development, which will streamline students’ interactions with the University. Kathleen Massey, McGill’s new University Registrar and Executive Director of Enrolment Services, is leading this initiative.

• A new development program for front-line staff—unique among Canadian universities—is being launched this fall to achieve excellence in service to students.

Re-inventing Libraries. Led by Trenholme Director of Libraries Janine Schmidt, the University’s library network is seeing continual improvement. The digital era, along with new multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to learning, has prompted a re-think of how the McGill library can best serve students and other users. The Cyberthèque is the latest step. This flexible space serves a new generation of humanities and social sciences students, providing pods for collaborative and independent study.

To find out how McGill is progressing on the recommendations of the Principal’s Task Force on Student Life and Learning, please visit our Report Card at www.mcgill.ca/studentlife.
A Neuroscience Powerhouse

In the last decade, McGill scientists have had the greatest Canadian research impact in the field of neuroscience and behaviour, as measured by the total number of citations as well as citations per paper. McGill researchers have dominated in competition, receiving more than 22 per cent of funding allocated by the CIHR. Institute of Neurosciences, Mental Health and Addiction over five years, the largest share of any Canadian university.

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) recognized researchers of McGill University and granting council funding and in total dollars.

McGill has had the highest research intensity, or average funding per full-time professor, of any Canadian institution in three of the last five years.

And we must be ever proactive in advancing our successes. Our leadership role is uneven; in some years other Canadian universities have surpassed McGill in per-capita research funding, and the research environment is exceptionally competitive. We have set targeted goals for the year ahead to increase our total research funding as a share of granting council funding and in total dollars.

Canada Foundation for Innovation Awards the Largest Grant in its History. The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) recognized researchers of McGill University and the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) with nearly $100 million in funding. This grant will be matched by $100 million from Quebec's Ministry of Health and Social Services and $50 million from donors for a total grant of $250 million. The award will create a state-of-the-art medical research centre as part of the MUHC's new Glen Campus. This centre will unite biomedical and clinical researchers in both paediatric and adult medicine in facilities designed to break down traditional disciplinary boundaries.

McGill Opens New Life Sciences Complex. Our $73-million Life Sciences Complex, the biggest construction project in McGill's history, will open on schedule in September. Researchers in developmental biology, cancer, chemical biology, cell information systems and complex traits are moving into this marvellous new space. The new era of personalized medicine at McGill will have treatments tailored to individuals. The critical mass of researchers we are building in science and medicine are creating new ways to work together. The Complex is designed to support new interdisciplinary collaboration and to join pure research with practical applications.

A $10-million gift from Francesco Bellini, co-founder of BioChem Pharma, planted the seed for this promising initiative. In the late 1980s, Dr. Bellini worked with two McGill professors, the late Bernard Belleau and Dr. Mark Wainberg of the Sir Mortimer B. Davis-Jewish General Hospital, to create 3TC, still one of the world's most widely used antiretroviral drugs in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Quebec government are welcome partners in the new Complex.

New Interdisciplinary Ventures Under Way. In 2007-08, initiatives stemming from McGill's strategic academic plan moved from concept to reality, strengthening our core areas of interdisciplinary activity—neuroscience; public policy; health and society; environment; computation, statistical inference and modelling; nanoscience and advanced materials; integrative systems biology; languages, literature and culture; and pain.

At example, a Neuroscience Graduate Program Task Force was formed to oversee the creation of a new integrated neuroscience graduate program. With the assistance of a $13-million federal Centres of Excellence in Commercialization and Research grant awarded to our distinguished Montreal Neurological Institute, this initiative will harness the extraordinary depth of neuroscience activity across our campuses and affiliated hospitals.

In the area of language, literature and culture, a new McGill Institute for the Public Life of Art and Ideas opened this past year, led by the Faculty of Arts and drawing on an interdisciplinary array of scholars from arts to architecture. The nerve centre for the interdisciplinary study of the humanities at McGill, the Institute will explore how artistic and intellectual creativity builds societies and changes the course of history.

Graduate Studies and Enhanced Recruitment

Graduate students are key to McGill's contributions as one of the world's great universities. Not only does their education play a critical societal role, but their talent and energy drive McGill's

Graduating Class 2007-08

In 2007-08, more than 7,400 students received degrees or certificates from McGill's 11 faculties and the Centre for Continuing Education.

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES AWARDED, 2007-08

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<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
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*McGill's new Life Sciences Complex, which joins the Stewart Biology Building and McIntyre Medical Building (left) and with the new Bellini Building (right) and cancer building, officially opens in September.
Selected Research Highlights

• A team of anesthesiologists, biomedical scientists and engineers led by Dr. Thomas M. Hemmerling of McGill’s Department of Anesthesia and the McGill University Health Centre performed the world’s first totally automated administration of an anesthetic. Nicknamed “McSleepy,” the new system administers general anesthesia and monitors its effects with no manual intervention.

• Shaheen Shariff, associate professor in McGill’s Faculty of Education launched her latest book, Cyber-Bullying: Issues and Solutions for the School, the Classroom and the Home, which garnered strong reviews.

• Vilceu Bordignon, director of the Large Animal Research Unit at McGill’s Macdonald Campus, produced Canada’s first cloned pigs, a discovery that will advance biomedical research into human ailments such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

• The McGill Aerospace Materials and Alloy Development Centre, a collaborative initiative between the National Research Council (NRC) and McGill’s Faculty of Engineering, opened. The Centre creates highly resistant materials, surface treatments and manufacturing processes designed to meet the extreme requirements of the aerospace industry.

• An international team of 450 distinguished scholars, led by editor-in-chief Gershon David Hundert, professor of history and of Jewish studies at McGill, published the YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, a landmark work that systematically presents the history and culture of Eastern European Jews.

• McGill researchers discovered that genes in the brains of suicide victims who had suffered child abuse functioned differently from genes in so-called normal brains, raising the possibility that early abuse may “mark” genes for life. The team consisted of Moshe Safy, a professor of Pharmacology and Therapeutics, psychiatrist Gaztavo Turecki of McGill’s Douglas Mental Health University Institute, Michael Meaney, a professor of Psychiatry and Neurology and Neurosurgery and researcher at the Douglas, and McGill post-doctoral research fellow Patrick McGowan.

• Siemens Health named a McGill study on the genetic origins of type 2 diabetes as one of their “Red-Hot Research Papers of 2007.” The study was led by Dr. Rob Sladek of the McGill University and Génome Québec Innovation Centre, along with Dr. Constantin Polychronakos of the McGill University Health Centre and colleagues at the Pasteur Institute, the Université de Montréal, Imperial College London and the Montreal Diabetes Research Center.

• Dr. John Stix, chair of McGill’s Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, and researchers from the University of California, San Diego, the University of British Columbia simulated the process that, with potentially devastating worldwide impact, can turn ordinary volcanic eruptions into so-called “supervolcanoes.”

• McGill’s Institute of Comparative Law completed a decade-long project to assist Russia in developing the legal framework for private commercial relations, thus helping the country transition to a market-based economy.

• Francesca Carriero and Vihang Errunza of the Desautels Faculty of Management, along with Ked Hogan of Barclays Global Investors, performed the first empirical analysis of the magnitude and drivers of interdependence among world equity markets based on a theoretical asset pricing model, work that will have wide-ranging implications for the investment management industry.

• A new research consortium was formed, linking McGill’s Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology (CIRMMT) with the BRAMS laboratory, a partnership between McGill and the Université de Montréal. The new initiative, which will solidify, Montreal’s reputation as the world’s premier site for research in the cognitive neuroscience of music, is exploring the neural underpinnings of human auditory cognition and the musical mind.

research and support outstanding professors. Graduate students serve as research mentors and role models for undergraduate students. McGill is distinguished by the fact that 26 per cent of our students are graduate students, and the proportion is increasing.

To meet our ambitious graduate student recruitment goals, McGill recently launched new and redesigned graduate student funding initiatives totalling more than $12 million in 2008, including the McGill International Doctoral Awards (MIADAS), providing about $8,000 per year in tuition relief for full-time international PhD students. A $5-million gift from John and Marcia McGill, announced as part of the launch of Campaign McGill, is bringing some of the world’s best graduate students to the Faculty of Arts. John McGill, a Rhodes scholar and former president of the Students’ Society of McGill University, serves as senior adviser for international gifts to Campaign McGill, which aims to raise a minimum of $115 million for graduate support.

International Partnerships

This spring, I gave a series of speeches in Canada, the United States and internationally on the role universities play in helping their home region to succeed in a rapidly changing and increasingly global context. Strong universities nurture distinctive clusters of excellence in knowledge and innovation that attract international investment and talent to a region and help advance the health, social cohesion and reputation of that region. Universities such as McGill, recognized worldwide for their quality and contributions, connect people in distinguished global networks and can showcase the unique strengths of their home city and county.

Who is better positioned to help Montreal, Quebec and Canada succeed than McGill? Our global character and view have been defining features of our identity since our inception, and this sets us apart from other universities.

Building on our continuing institutional advancement of targeted academic collaborations in Quebec, elsewhere in Canada, in California and in India, a group of McGill colleagues and I recently visited California, Calgary, Boston, Toronto and five regions in the Middle East to broaden and strengthen our networks and to build strategic alliances. We will continue to build on these efforts to focus McGill’s engagement in both highly industrialized nations and in emerging regions. As part of this effort, I will lead a team to visit cities in the United States, Central and Western Canada, Asia and Europe this coming fall and spring. Here are a few highlights of recent and upcoming activities:

The Middle East. This summer, a McGill delegation of senior academics visited the Middle East to advance valuable partnerships, engage with alumni, parents, friends and incoming students, and to promote McGill, Quebec and Canada. McGill’s strong links to the region put us in position to play a prominent role. During this fascinating trip, we discussed the role of women in academe and medicine in Saudi Arabia, met with the senior team at Qatar’s Education City, engaged in a lively two-hour discussion with CEOs in Dubai, and discussed partnership opportunities with top-flight universities and research institutions in Israel, among many other highlights. Seeing first-hand the impact McGill has on the world and the great esteem in which our university is held is an enormous source of pride to me as Principal.
Canada-California Strategic Innovation Partnership. In 2007-08, McGill continued to play a leadership role in the Canada-California Strategic Innovation Partnership (CCSIP), an initiative that promotes collaboration among academic, private sector, financial and public sector organizations in shared areas of priority. For more information, see www.ccsip.org. CCSIP aims to enhance the global competitiveness of the two jurisdictions in research, development and the delivery of innovation to the marketplace. Already the initiative has resulted in a three-year collaborative agreement to better understand how stem cells can be used to prevent and treat cancer, funded through an investment of $100 million from the governments of Canada and Ontario.

India and China. McGill continues to expand the relationship stemming from our participation in a 2006 scientific and trade mission to India, led by Premier Jean Charest. Ten McGill research projects are under way with Indian partners, including collaborations on transportation and breast cancer, with six more proposals under development. We have signed three Memoranda of Understanding and participated in numerous scientific delegations and workshops. McGill is discussing the formation of a joint Canada-India venture on biofuels, as part of a larger McGill strategy to advance strategic collaborations in this field internationally.

China, an historic and current emerging force in education and research, is another area of strong engagement for McGill. Several McGill research projects with China, ranging from the epigenomics of liver cancer, to machine-to-machine communications, have been funded through provincial and federal programs promoting partnerships with the country.

Public Citizenship and Outreach

McGill’s global reach is tremendous. And it is because of this—not in spite of it—that we are able to contribute so significantly to Quebec and Canada, as well as the world. Because of the international reputation of our medical school, for example, we are able to attract the finest health care professionals to serve the citizens of our province. As a leading public contributor, McGill also helps shape policy, at home and abroad, and stimulates informed debate within and between communities.

Quebec. Over the past year, we have worked to deepen relationships with our superb health care affiliates—the McGill University Health Centre, the Sir Mortimer B. Davis–Jewish General Hospital, the Douglas Mental Health University Institute and St. Mary’s Hospital Center—so that, together, we can best meet the health needs of Quebecers while advancing our joint research, teaching and services. Guided by Richard I. Levin, the Vice-Principal (Health Affairs) and Dean of Medicine, the McGill University Health Network has health care responsibility for 63 per cent of the territory of Quebec and 23 per cent of the population through the Réseau universitaire intégré de santé (RUIS), which provides better access to tertiary health care in Quebec’s regions.

Recently, St. Mary’s Hospital Center received official designation from the Quebec government as a university-affiliated hospital (CHAU), raising its profile and prospects for graduate education and clinical research. Plans for the new Campus santé Outaouais, in which McGill is a partner, are also reaching fruition. McGill’s School of Physical and Occupational Therapy is developing a program with the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi to train physical therapists to serve the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region.

McGill students, faculty and staff also work directly with the disadvantaged in Montreal, through both University-led initiatives and partnerships with local agencies. The University’s dental outreach clinic, which sees our Faculty of Dentistry professors, clinicians and students visit community centres to provide free treatment, this year celebrated its 10th anniversary. Led by Anne Farray (Assistant to the Dean of Education), Don Maclean (Dean of the Schulich School of Music) and Catherine Stace (Career Advisor, Career and Placement Services), the McGill community of administrative and support staff, students and faculty rallied to raise more than $331,000 for Centraide of Greater Montreal, a United Way/Centraide Canada organization that improves quality of life for the most vulnerable members of our community. And these are just two of numerous compelling examples.

Tackling Global Issues. Each year, McGill hosts major national and international symposia on issues of global importance, from climate change to the origins of life. Last October, McGill was honoured to present the Global Conference on the Prevention of Genocide, the first major non-governmental international conference on the topic. Sponsored by the Eichenberg Family Foundation, the conference brought together survivors, decision-makers and activists to explore systemic ways to prevent genocidal violence. The conference is an extension of the broad international outreach conducted by the Faculty of Law’s Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, which works with governments, courts and organizations to monitor and uphold human rights across the globe.

McGill’s policy experts work with governments at home and globally, advising decision-makers on how best to support fragile democracies, build peace, create better conditions for working families and establish good governance structures. For example, as part of an international initiative to strengthen evidence-based policy making, Wendy Thomson, Director of the School of Social Work, who was chief adviser to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair on public service reform, is advising President John Kufuor of Ghana on ways to improve his government’s capacity to deliver on its priorities.

Through volunteer opportunities, international internships and field studies, McGill students learn from community leaders and apply their skills and knowledge around the world. For example, the McGill chapter of Engineers Without Borders raises funds to send students to help build the technical capabilities of developing nations. At the Future Centre in Barbados, an innovative scientific and educational facility developed by Counterpart Caribbean, an NGO, Bioresource Engineering student Vincent Martineau and Civil Engineering student Jessica Worley designed a biodigester to produce the energy needed for a biodiesel production system.

Advocacy for Higher Education. Many members of the McGill community represent the University in its efforts to bolster public support for higher education. I currently serve as president of the Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec, as a member of the executive committees of the Association of American Universities and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, and as a member of the federal Science, Technology and Innovation Council. These roles offer the privilege of contributing to the setting of funding priorities, new program development and key domains of public policy. In these endeavours, I benefit tremendously from the complementary activities and counsel of McGill colleagues.

Autonomy and Governance. University autonomy and governance have recently emerged (again) as substantial concerns. From British Columbia to Newfoundland, governments are resorting to new and onerous demands and restrictions on universities, often motivated by short-term exigencies and interests. In this province, the unfortunate financial troubles encountered by a sister university have sparked in all of us a legitimate desire to prevent this from happening again in any publicly funded institution. However, I reject outright the notion that new regulations are required to do so. Strong oversight mechanisms existed that could have prevented this situation.

Let me be clear: Those in government, like all of us, are right to be concerned about how taxpayers’ dollars are spent. Universities must be accountable and transparent, have responsible management and gov-
Sustainability

As we approach the middle of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), McGill is moving to become a thoroughly green institution, and we will all have to step up to reach leadership status in this arena, as an institution.

New Office of Sustainability Opens. In 2007, McGill added a second full-time position in this area, the Director of Sustainability, Dennis Fortune, and in the early fall, McGill's new Office of Sustainability will open. The office aims to be a hub and catalyst for sustainability initiatives on campus, and choosing the best ways for McGill to benchmark its performance.

Visit www.mcgill.ca/stewardship/greentour to take a virtual tour of the gardens and trees on the downtown campus.

Sustainability Highlights

- McGill’s new Life Sciences Complex, which includes a green roof, was built to meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards, a widely accepted third-party designation encompassing building design, construction and operation.
- More than 2,000 McGill students, faculty and staff have signed up for the Rethink Pledge, committing to at least five actions to reduce their environmental impact on campus.
- In 2007-08, McGill added more than 300 new recycling bins.
- An increase in parking rates in January 2008 will bring in $200,000 a year for new sustainability projects.
- Dining Services is now offering fair-trade coffee, cage-free eggs and local seasonal produce, and is continuing its commitment to using reduced and more sustainable packaging.
- Students and faculty from the School of Architecture and Urban Planning have joined with a local organization, Santropol Roulant, to create an impressive container garden on the downtown campus. Santropol Roulant uses the vegetables grown there to provide food for its meals-on-wheels program.

Campus Renewal and Upgrading Highlights

- The largest construction project in McGill’s history, the $73-million Life Sciences Complex, will open in September 2008.
- The current expansion of the Montreal Neurological Institute will add new brain imaging research facilities, clinical space and a healing garden. Completion is expected in late 2009.
- In Spring 2008, McGill acquired the Montreal Diocesan Theological College building on University St., which will add 44 new residence spaces.
- A $12.3-million project is under way to rebuild the 100-year-old underground service tunnel. The work, which will be completed in two stages over 2008 and 2009, is necessary to ensure that the tunnel can reliably provide heat, telecommunications and power to significant portions of the downtown campus.

Deferred Maintenance. Due to decades of underfunding, universities across Canada have been forced to postpone necessary maintenance, resulting in a staggering backlog and replacement work that threatens not just health and safety, but also our research and teaching potential. Owning the lion’s share of the older buildings at Quebec universities, McGill bears the largest burden of deferred maintenance.

With welcome new funding from the Quebec government, we will be able to complete approximately $30 million of deferred maintenance projects per year over the next decade and a half. While this new investment is welcome, the gap between income and operating costs must be closed to prevent the further accumulation of deferred maintenance. We will continue to work with the Quebec and federal governments and other partners to create ways to achieve appropriate infrastructure and to sustain optimal care of our holdings.

Master Plan. McGill’s Master Plan seeks to realize the full potential of our facilities and grounds. In 2007-08, the McGill Board of Governors approved the principles governing how we will improve McGill space, which include preserving our historic buildings and green spaces; carrying out future development according to sustainability guidelines; and being fully accessible and safe for pedestrians, people with disabilities and cyclists. (To learn more, please visit www.mcgill.ca/masterplan/.) In the coming year, we will draft a five-year implementation plan to guide the development of McGill’s campuses to support our academic mission and our stewardship of Mount Royal.

Funding: The Means to the End

Students sometimes ask me why I focus so much on money and underfunding. To be sure, funding is only a means to an end. But without increasing resources at the same pace as our competitors, the vast potential of McGill’s extraordinary, talented people will not be fully realized and our mission will be undermined. We cannot let this happen. Indeed, a priority for me, as Principal, is to be able to guarantee that all students qualified to attend McGill will be able to do so, independent of their financial means. McGill cannot currently afford to make this promise, though we are making clear progress toward that goal. Adequate funding supports us in attracting the best graduate students and faculty from around the world. It supports us in making headway on climate change, improved cancer treatments,
human rights, understanding creativity, ameliorating the food crisis, disease prevention and emerging markets, among many other areas in which we excel.

On the plus side, our overall revenues have grown year-over-year in the past five years, and continue to do so. With our collective efforts in shaping effective public policy and competing at the highest level for research funding, government support and philanthropy, this trend will continue.

Of course, finding the resources to support our academic mission is not just about increasing our budget. We aim to reduce waste, continue to commit to priorities, and leverage and invest our resources wisely.

This year, we have streamlined many administrative and financial services and created economies of scale. We are also implementing new educational programs to support staff as they enhance the quality and efficiency of service offered. McGill’s new IT strategic plan, developed under the leadership of Chief Information Officer Sylvia Franke plays a key role in realizing efficiencies and supporting our teaching and research goals.

**Government Funding.** This year has seen tangible progress in public funding. In addition to the Quebec government’s substantial support for deferred maintenance, the provincial budget provided a further $53 million to universities, above and beyond the federal transfer payment for post-secondary education.

The federal budget also brought good news, as much of the funding for post-secondary institutions and research was designed to reward merit, rather than to spread scarce funding dollars across as broad a base as possible. The new Vanier Graduate Scholarship Awards, Canada Global Excellence Research Chairs and a substantial new endowment for deferred maintenance, the provincial budget provided a further $53 million to universities, above and beyond the federal transfer payment for post-secondary education.

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Underfunding nonetheless remains a significant preoccupation. McGill is ranked first among Canadian universities by both the *Times Higher Education Supplement*—QS World University Rankings and *Maclean’s*; yet in terms of operating dollars per student, McGill places 31st out of 47 universities Canada-wide in the *Maclean’s* rankings. Although Quebec once had the highest per-capita operating grants to its universities, which helped offset the lowest tuition rates in Canada and the U.S., Quebec has slipped behind other provinces in its funding. At the same time, other nations are investing more than ever in their universities, graduate students and research, and providing greater flexibility for universities to innovate and generate funds from other sources.

**Campaign McGill.** To achieve maximum stability, Canadian universities must have a broader funding base—Quebec universities especially so. On October 18, 2007, we publicly launched Campaign McGill, the most ambitious fundraising venture in McGill’s history. With the largest starting goal for a Canadian university, the $750-million campaign will allow us to attract and support effectively our outstanding professors, graduate students and undergraduates to provide an environment in which they will thrive. Since 2004, our loyal supporters have helped us raise more than $400 million toward our goal. And it is not only the large gifts that make an impact—the combined contributions of all our alumni, staff, students and friends are absolutely vital to supporting our mission. Every gift, at every level, makes a difference.

Campaign McGill also provides an opportunity to broaden our local and international profile and networks, and to increase the involvement of alumni, parents and friends of McGill. In 2008 and 2009, we are launching McGill across Canada, the U.S., Asia and Europe. These regional events, which have proven enormously popular and productive to date, enable us to update our supporters on McGill news and to build new connections throughout the world.

**Conclusion**

Globalization, technological advances, scientific, social and cultural transitions and environmental limits are transforming our world. Looking over McGill’s accomplishments of the past year, of which this report only scratches the surface, I am confident that we are moving in the right direction. With the support of our outstanding McGill community, government, other partners and our loyal alumni and friends, the spirit, talent and ideas at McGill are anticipating—and effectively responding to—the challenges of our changing world. We expect no less.

I thank all of you who have worked diligently in extending the reach and impact of our teaching, research and service to the community. Students, faculty, administrative and support staff have been key in reaching these achievements. As well, McGill’s Provost, Deputy and Associate Provosts, Vice-Principals, Deans, Chairs and Directors, and those who support and work with them, have contributed thoughtful leadership to support McGill as a great university—an exciting place to study, work and claim the future. My gratitude goes out as well to McGill’s committed volunteers: the Chair of the Board of Governors, the Chancellor, the dedicated members of Senate and Board of Governors, leaders serving on the Campaign McGill Executive Cabinet and its committees, and McGill’s many other campaign, alumni, student, staff and faculty volunteers. McGill’s distinctive strengths position us well to remain one of the world’s leading research universities and an ever-more-valuable asset to Montreal, Quebec and Canada.

I take enormous pride in serving as the sixteenth Principal of McGill University. I thank you all profoundly, for that which you contribute to making our McGill an outstanding university. Our hands shall not grow weak, nor shall our footsteps falter. It is my privilege to submit this report to you.