



WITH THE TRANSITIONAL SEASON OF FALL UPON US, WE ARE appropriately enough in the midst of a season of transition at SU this year. I am serving as Interim Chancellor and President during a period when we are celebrating Nancy Cantor's leadership as she prepares to become Chancellor of Rutgers University in Newark, following 10 years during which the University has been propelled to unforeseen new heights, many of which are described in this issue's feature article (see page 22). At the same time, we're preparing to welcome new Chancellor and President Kent Syverud, whose academic leadership acumen, experience addressing some of higher education's greatest contemporary challenges, and record of accomplishment as an engaged scholar and dedicated teacher bode exceptionally well for building on our era of unprecedented success.

As it happens, many dimensions of that success were evident in concentrated form during the first weekend in October, when SU hosted a convergence of major University-wide events that brought thousands from literally around the world to Central New York. Celebrating its 10th anniversary season, the Syracuse International Film Festival—the brainchild of College of Visual Performing Arts faculty member and film impresario Owen Shapiro and his wife, Christine Fawcett-Shapiro—blanketed screens across the city with works from the classic to the avant-garde by filmmakers from China and India to Italy to Canada and the United States, including a suite of films focused on disability issues. Imagining America, the national consortium of artists and scholars in public life based at SU with more than 100 academic institutional members, hosted its annual conference in Syracuse over the same period, issuing a "Call to Action" to engage people across the disciplines to revive democratic practice in communities in an era when civil discourse sometimes seems in short supply.

But the main event of the weekend surely was Orange Central, SU's annual homecoming and reunion extravaganza. Alumni from across the decades and across continents not only renewed acquaintances and reminisced, but also brought their experience and expertise to bear on the preparation of the current generation of SU students for the world through a robust array of formal and informal face-to-face interactions. A notable example was the inaugural Engineering Meets Business Lecture, when Diane Reineke G'90, a vice president for business development at Northrop Grumman Information Systems, discussed with students how to navigate the journey from academic engineering to success in the business world. We also took the opportunity to laud our latest group of Arents awardees—Taye Diggs '93, Carol Swid Eisner '58, Henry Grethel '54, Sid Lerner '53, and George Saunders G'88—whose commitment to doing well while doing good exemplifies our aspirations for all SU students.

Across the eras, through times of certainty, times of challenge, and times of transition, that is a defining ethos that endures at SU—as it is sure to be through the times ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric F. Spina".

Eric F. Spina
Interim Chancellor and President
Vice Chancellor and Provost

