Tim Renjilian has begun his term as the new board chair of the Chautauqua Foundation. He succeeds Cathy Bonner of Austin, Texas, who completed her term in August 2019. A CPA and graduate of the University of Virginia, Renjilian is senior managing director at FTI Consulting in Atlanta, where he provides consulting services to a range of clients, mainly in the health care sector. He previously served on the Institution’s Board of Trustees and has been a member of the audit, investment and nominating and governance committees of the Foundation’s Board of Directors. He and his wife, Leslie, have co-chaired the Chautauqua Fund for the past two years and have been coming to Chautauqua with their daughters since 2000.

Speaking from his Atlanta office after the close of the 2019 Chautauqua season, Renjilian said he is excited to accept the role of chair in the midst of a time of transition for the organization. At the end of this calendar year, the majority of fundraising and development functions housed within the Foundation will officially move under the purview of Chautauqua Institution, while the Chautauqua Foundation and its board will remain focused on managing and growing the endowment to maximize resources.
BLUEPRINTS from p. 1

inclusion, a security assessment plan, a strategic financial plan, a campus master plan, waterfront management plan and more. 150 Forward also identified a set of shared values steering the vision for Chautauqua.

“I’m 66 years old, and I’m used to seeing a strategic plan with three- to five-year goals, milestones and metrics,” Pardo told a group assembled in the Hall of Christ on July 4. “This document, however, is a modern strategic vision, crafted from our mission, our discussions and your comments. The four major objectives are our goals and the four cross-cutting imperatives are business steps. These business steps are items that — if we don’t do them right — we can’t be as successful as we want to be.”

The four cross-cutting imperatives Pardo referred to emphasize Chautauqua’s fundamental commitment to:

• Build more and stronger strategic partnerships with like-minded institutions around the nation and beyond;
• Mobilize technology in service to our mission and program;
• Identify labor and talent solutions in the execution of the summer season and the rest of the year given our rural location in western New York; and
• Increase the accessibility of Chautauqua to diverse audiences both on and off the grounds, prioritizing inclusion, diversity, equity and access.

The four objectives of Forward 150 are also ambitious. “This is a 10-year plan that belongs to all of us,” Currie told the assembly in July. “While it does not change our mission, it articulates a compelling vision and mission-critical values that collectively call Chautauqua to a larger role in the world.”

Input from some 700 Chautauquans who completed surveys in addition to the focus groups and conversations throughout the last year helped the committee identify the challenges and opportunities ahead. Consultants also provided assistance through a benchmarking scan, institutional positioning research, a financial assessment, a traditional SWOT analysis and a “Five Forces” analysis which addresses Chautauqua’s competition in the marketplace.

Hill explained that some innovations that address the objectives are already underway, such as a reimagining of opera programming to include a weekend festival, an experiment conducted this past season and to be repeated in 2020. The Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra’s novel program of performing live movie scores while the film is shown in the Amphitheater is another innovation to broaden interest in the symphony’s work. The Department of Religion’s Interfaith Friday programming — now having completed its second year — has produced a DVD that sold out immediately in its first iteration following the 2018 season.

Packaging and generating revenue from Chautauqua’s content are a priority in the new plan, as is raising the profile of the Institution nationally. The Department of Marketing and Communications has also produced a new magazine — replacing the biannual publication The Chautauquan — as a part of the effort to build stronger brand recognition for Chautauqua by presenting content that speaks to a broader audience.

It is also urgent that a scientific approach to improving the water quality of Chautauqua Lake be carried out immediately. “Advocacy and coalition building are well underway,” Hill said.

“…”And as we work toward bringing more diverse groups to the grounds,” Hill added, “we are looking at the vitality of alumni groups from sorority and fraternity organizations at historically black colleges and universities who might see Chautauqua as an appropriate reunion destination — that’s just one idea under the inclusion rubric.”

Hill also noted that the Institution is still looking to significantly leverage technology to create a first-class guest experience and support an expanded model. “What does year-round programming look like at Chautauqua?” Hill asked. “Autumn here is beautiful. Could we fill the Athenaeum Hotel in the fall like we do in summer?”

Ultimately, Hill noted, Chautauqua cannot remain sustainable, even with larger numbers of attendees, without evolving. Significant growth in the Institution’s endowment and annual support must come from new sources of support who see the value in Chautauqua spreading its impact across the country and around the world.
A New Team, A New Journey Forward

On the heels of the successful Promise Campaign and with ever more ambitious plans for the future of Chautauqua, we are preparing ourselves to rise to the occasion of our 150th anniversary with determination and high hopes.

As the Foundation Board is charged with determining how best to support Chautauqua in the near and long term by investing wisely, the advancement staff is charged with significantly growing the size and number of gifts to the endowment under the new strategic plan. Chautauqua cannot simply increase attendance or raise gate tickets to achieve its expanded vision.

The strategic plan calls for growth in the Institution’s endowment to reach a total in excess of $125 million in the near term. This growth is, of course, critical to the success of the other programmatic and institutional objectives in the plan. We are grateful that President Hill recognized that an increased investment in advancement has been the first priority. On the heels of the successful Promise Campaign and with even more ambitious plans for the future of Chautauqua, we are preparing ourselves to rise to the occasion of our 150th anniversary with determination and high hopes. We hope you will join us on this journey of discovery and building.
Pillars visited with three Chautauquans who are business leaders to invite their comments on the strategic vision and planning process that the Institution has undertaken. Longtime Chautauquan and popular speaker Peter Georgescu, author/podcaster/consultant Mamie Kanfer Stewart and Foundation Director Dick Wade offered their best thinking about the future directions proposed in the new plan.

Peter Georgescu is chairman emeritus and former CEO of Young & Rubicam, one of the most illustrious global marketing and communications firms with 189 offices in 93 countries. Since his retirement from Y&R, Georgescu has written several books on income inequality in the United States, championing the middle class and advocating for the business sector to look beyond corporate stockholders and to secure the well-being of all employees and other corporate stakeholders. He is a regular contributor to Forbes magazine, a popular speaker and a frequent guest on media programs and at the Aspen Institute. Georgescu’s wife, Barbara, has been coming to Chautauqua for 40 years and served on the Institution’s board of trustees for eight years. She first brought her husband to the Institution some 20 years ago. Peter has delivered lectures on ethics and capitalism on many occasions in various venues on the grounds.

Mamie Kanfer Stewart is author of Momentum: Creating Effective, Engaging and Enjoyable Meetings and host of The Modern Manager podcast. She is founder of a Jewish Partnership for Justice. Mamie also serves as board chair of Bend the Arc.

Dick Wade served a greater purpose?

Peter Georgescu

Peter starting by applauding the initial exercise of having a strategic plan. It is essential that we conduct this exercise. Times are changing, and we are going to see an acceleration in change over the next decade. We have to be adroit and flexible. We have to understand clearly the foundation of what Chautauqua is — what we do best.

To me, the single most important priority is recognizing that the 10:45 lecture is the most critical driver of what we do. The essence of Chautauqua is to wrestle with the critical issues of our time. This is who we are. The richness of this program is a tremendous asset. We are not going to run out of things to talk about and to do, but we need an essential network of connections to make it happen — access to people and organizations — and that will cost money.

I think opening the new office in Washington, D.C., is a great beginning, and we need more connections with other major centers in this country. Silicon Valley, for example, is the entrepreneurial center of this country, and we need to understand what’s going on there. The world of technology is a big part of our future, and we need to open ourselves to that and to understand its power.

The other thing Chautauqua needs to better understand is business, the creators of our prosperity. Government is critically important, too, but business should be an essential part of our programming. Of course, religion, spirituality, ethics and morality are key components, too. The country has lost a lot of understanding in this arena. The institutions of religion and our models of ethical behavior are under attack. Here again, we have a chance to understand and move forward in a more constructive way. Spirituality can be part of the religious experience at Chautauqua, and at times, without the dogma and institutional baggage. That is a strength of ours. Ethics and morality are essential to our survival. Truth matters; values matter. Society is pushing individual, selfish priorities to the point where morality and values are not essential in our daily lives. We need to look firmly in the mirror. Who is better than Chautauqua to lead this discussion about where we are going?

I am pleased to see that we are addressing the issue of endowment in this new plan. Money matters. We certainly need to cross the $100 million mark with our endowment and even elevate it to much more substantive levels. Chautauqua does not want to lose our diversity — not just diversity of gender, religion and race, but of income. We must support people of all means who value education. We have to have the resources to support diversity here.

We have phenomenal assets at Chautauqua — the physical beauty of this place. We are blessed with the possibility of year-round opportunities. The limit is only our imaginations. Partnerships for music festivals, documentary festivals, other programming — why not at Chautauqua? We need to make sure some of the basics are here — a reinvigorated and repurposed hotel, for example. How can we partner with people to have the Athenaeum serve a greater purpose?

The fundamentals are important. After coming here for all these years, today we have the best kept and attractive Chautauqua I’ve ever seen. Yes, the quality of food has lagged behind. People come with a desire to have a great experience, and we are moving in the right direction. We have to look at all the options on the grounds that could become destinations across the whole year. Exploring how we use the land across the street is also essential. We need to use that asset instead of letting it sit dormant. I believe it’s important we develop new lines of revenue.

Our multi-generational family has been coming to Chautauqua for 12 years. I love that my children have spent every summer of their lives on the grounds. We live in Brooklyn, New York, the rest of the year, so the green, community-oriented environment gives our kids freedom and space they’d otherwise not have. As a family, the access to the arts and other programming, including the speakers, is incredibly powerful. I love how you can sit outside the Amphitheater and listen for 10 or 20 minutes, or stay for part of a performance and go home before the kids get antsy. It is an easy way to expose them and myself to so


I am extremely impressed with the expansive view the committee brought to strategic planning. I appreciate how the plan tackles a number of important issues in a comprehensive and thoughtful way. I believe the plan addresses our community’s core objectives and will make the Institution stronger in the future.

The lake is especially important to my husband, and so when I saw the strategic plan has prioritized the environment and sustainability of the lake, we were both thrilled. Already we’re seeing the deterioration of the lake impact our Chautauqua experience. It’s a bit alarming to receive an email warning about unsafe swimming. As a community, we can’t let the health of the lake continue to decline.

Diversity and inclusion are another major theme, as they should be. Living in Brooklyn, we are used to all kinds of diversity among our neighbors and when we come to Chautauqua for the summer, it feels like a bubble — the best and worst aspects of a bubble. Finding ways to make Chautauqua more affordable, more accessible to a wider variety of people, and finding ways for people to experience the value of Chautauqua without necessarily coming to the grounds is critically important. I’m also grateful that the plan considers how Chautauqua can contribute to the local community. Whether through investing in the local economy, making the grounds useful to the entire region year-round or offering programming in the local schools — all of these are visionary ideas that are not only totally appropriate for Chautauqua, but help us build a healthier relationship with the broader community.

Let’s face it: the idea of Chautauqua has always been big and ambitious, and this plan is big and ambitious. I get more and more excited when I think of what Chautauqua can be in another 10 to 20 years. I also believe that by expanding the vision of Chautauqua, the Institution will be attractive to many different and new funder communities — philanthropists in arts and culture, investors in economic development and environmental advocates, to name a few. Dick Wade is still a little-known secret. If we are passionate about its future possibilities and make a good case for support from organizations and partners, I believe we can bring the strategic plan to life and chart a visionary course for the future of Chautauqua.

Dick Wade has worked in banking his entire career. When he retired in 2010, he was serving as chief risk officer of the commercial bank for J.P. Morgan Chase. His wife, Gabby, had been visiting Chautauqua with her sister for 15 years before Dick took time to experience the season and get involved. “When I finally got here,” Wade said, “I was so mad at myself for what I’d been missing. I looked at what I walked into — 140 years of history, investment, care and concern for this amazing place. Almost immediately, I knew I was in a special place.” Wade has served on the Chautauqua Foundation’s board of directors, was a member of the strategic planning working group that devised the components of 150 Forward, and in October took his seat as an Institution trustee.

In 36 years of banking, where have I ever seen a facility as large as the Amphitheater taken down and rebuilt in 10 months in time for the next season? Never. When I saw that accomplished, I felt like this place can do anything!

From a banker’s perspective, I believe Chautauqua got the most advantageous terms on the construction loan that was needed up front, while generous donors paid off their pledges to support the project. What John Shedd, vice president of campus planning and operations, and his team accomplished in 10 months with the help of so many others was remarkable, and the $41 million raised from Chautauquans was a clear indication of what we are capable of doing.

For those of us on the Strategic Planning Working Group, the planning process this past year was a labor of love. It wasn’t just 13 people, it was all the listening sessions, the surveys, the website — all those Chautauquans providing their input. We felt the pressure of being responsive to what we had heard, but had fun throughout the yearlong process.

Yes, the plan is aggressive, and we spent an enormous amount of time getting after each other, questioning ourselves, making sure we developed clear and defined measurements for where we want to be in 2024. It will require some fundamental changes, such as moving the development function over to the Institution and building new strategic partnerships around the country. The real work is just getting started, but all the pieces are being put into place. The more Chautauquans see of the plan in motion, I believe the more confidence they will have in it.

Another initiative already underway is the collaboration around the lake. The Institution sponsored a gathering of 16 organizations involved with Chautauqua Lake who met together for the first time ever. Fifteen of those organizations signed a memorandum of agreement to cooperate and work on a science-based solution to the deteriorating health of the lake. That is why the lake is the third objective in the strategic plan and a significant priority. This is our drinking water, after all.

Of course, there are challenges we face. We know that the under-investment in technology over the years is an issue. To use one example, we don’t really have a good way to count the number of people who show up at the Hall of Philosophy in the afternoons, so we can’t apply accurate data to our allocation of expense or revenue to many of our activities such as the 2 p.m. interfaith lecture series. Chautauqua Institution is a very complex, $36 million business, probably the most complex I’ve seen. We’ve got to have the technology to track everything we are doing financially and as part of the overall operation.

Already we have some great problem solvers working on our objectives. Leland Lewis, general manager of the Athenaeum Hotel, heard all of the complaints about how much trouble it is to come from off the grounds for dinner at the hotel with parking and walking to and from the grounds. So he began offering valet parking for off-grounds dinner guests — a great solution. Input from Chautauquans clearly made “upping our game” in housing and food service a high priority. Leland and his team are addressing those issues.

Michael and his team are reviewing and renewing youth and family programs. With Alyssa Porter, we also have on board a new director of youth and family programs, a function that is critical to our future. We have such strength in our intergenerational opportunities.

On the cross-cutting imperative of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA), we are also moving forward. We will need to do extraordinary things at Chautauqua and deal with some fundamental issues, but I believe we can and will become more inclusive over time with additional focus. All Chautauquans will need to be part of the solution. It can’t just be the administration.

And, finally, the best time to start the next capital campaign is right after a successful one, and the Promise Campaign was just that. We are just beginning to gauge the depth of the philanthropic market for Chautauqua’s new strategic plan. I wouldn’t be betting against this administration to pull it off — the whole plan!
The Fruits of Family Friendship

Jess also designed a floor mosaic of “The Fruits of Family Friendship,” which also rubbed off on Kris’ son, Chris. While the guys watched games and talked sports, Jess and Kris were often plotting their next “Great Dames Luncheon” at Chautauqua — a party-by-invitation with various female neighbors that always involved raucous laughter and delicious food that Jess prepared.

Sitting on the Hermance’s expansive porch this past summer with the family dogs — Max (an elderly basset hound/Labrador mix) and Rosie (a Jack Russell/wirehaired Dachshund mix) — perched on their own ottomans, Emily yelled up as she remembered how Jess came to her wedding on Long Island in 2007, dancing the night away. She was truly the life of the party. Both Emily’s father, Ron, and Jess had received their cancer diagnoses by then.

A year later, on Ron’s 67th birthday, Jess made him a magnificent pie and while no one was looking, the basset hound ate the whole thing. “I love Max,” Jess said at the time, shrugging her shoulders and grinning, “because he’s a bad dog.” That turned out to be Ron’s last summer at Chautauqua. Jess lived another year, long enough to meet Emily’s first child, Charlotte, when she was only four months old. Cancer took Jess in August 2015.

Kris says she imagines her husband and Jess high above Chautauqua now, laughing and talking incessantly. “She was one of the funniest people I ever met,” Kris said. “Sometimes she had no filters!” Emily added, “She was very spirited.” Kris explained “after we lost them both, I talked to my boys, Alexander and Christopher, and Emilie, we knew we wanted to do something to honor Jessica through the Hermance Family Foundation that my husband and I, with our children, created years ago.”

The idea for a Chautauqua project came to Kris one day last year as she was sitting on the grass outside the Children’s School in the blazing sun, watching her granddaughter and other students perform in the small, open-sided playhouse in the front yard known as the “temple.” “This could be so much better, I thought,” Kris said. “The school had simply outgrown the space. So I talked to Kit, and then I went to Geoff Follansbee at the Foundation to say I wanted a more user-friendly space.”

The Jessica Trapasso Pavilion was built in the 2018–19 off-season and is now connected to the main school building by a handsome concrete patio lined with benches and new plantings. The patio extends into the pavilion, where open air windows and columns echo the design of the old temple, but now more than twice as large. The structure is painted brown on the outside and “Amphitheater yellow” on the inside walls.

Over the years, Kit and Jess Trapasso shared many meals and celebrations with Kris and Ron Hermance during their summers at Chautauqua. Both couples were originally from Western New York. Though Ron’s career relocated the family to several cities, Chautauqua was the constant. Until his retirement, Ron Hermance was a successful banker who lectured in the Amphitheater on the subprime mortgage crisis in 2008 and explained why his bank was among those who did not accept the government’s offer of Troubled Asset Relief Funds (TARP) to purchase toxic assets.

Ron and Kit also shared what Kris calls “a maniacal love of the Buffalo Bills,” which also rubbed off on Kit’s son, Chris. While the guys watched games and talked sports, Jess and Kris were often plotting their next “Great Dames Luncheon” at Chautauqua — a party-by-invitation with various female neighbors that always involved raucous laughter and delicious food that Jess prepared.

Kris Hermance with grandchildren serves as a multi-purpose gathering space for the school — by turns a practice and performance space, a craft studio, a science lab, an extra classroom, a shelter against the elements, and a gallery for exhibitions of the children’s art and sculpture. As a final touch, in honor of her creative and colorful friend, Kris insisted that the ceiling be painted sky blue with two golden stars set high above as a reminder of the school’s guardian-angel friends, Ron Hermance and Jess Trapasso.

On July 26, the Hermance and Trapasso families, along with many friends, Children’s School staff and the community, gathered for the dedication and ribbon-cutting of the Jessica Trapasso Pavilion.

“You know,” Emily said to her mother, patting the dogs on the porch, “I think Kit and Jess were truly best friends, just like you and dad were. I guess that’s why our families have been so close.” Kris agreed.
industry—Best Pianos
provide pathways to music and joy

In 2007, Chautauqua was named an all-Steinway piano festival and joined other prominent summer music festivals held in Aspen, Colorado, Tanglewood, Massachusetts, and Brevard, North Carolina, among others. This prestigious designation came after the Institution completed more than $7 million in improvements to its rehearsal and recital halls, the practice cabins and other facilities on the School of Music campus. In the ensuing years, this combination of excellence in instruments and Chautauqua’s extraordinary music faculty has made the Schools of Performing and Visual Arts’ programs ever more competitive with other music festivals around the world.

“In the Piano Program, with the leadership trio we have today — co-chairs Nikki Melville and John Milbauer (both former students in Chautauqua’s Piano Program) and the internationally acclaimed pianist Alexander (Sasha) Gavrylyuk as the Heintzelman Family Artistic Advisor and Artist-in-Residence — we are now consistently receiving applications from top schools such as The Juilliard School for the first time,” said Vice President of Performing and Visual Arts Deborah Sonya Moore. “We experienced the highest number of piano applicants ever this year!”

However, premier piano maker Steinway & Sons, established in 1853, was sold to an investment firm in 2013 and earlier this year announced they would discontinue its festival leasing program. This June, new owners of the company sold nearly half of Steinway’s historic factory in Astoria, New York, and, according to news reports, the plant is combining its U.S. production and restoration into one building.

A general decline in sales, among other factors leading to the change in its business model, led Steinway to announce that it is ending its rental program with music festivals, and the status of many of the Steinways’ music campus and performance venues must now change. Access to these industry best-standard instruments are a key aspect of Chautauqua’s recruitment of top students. “The Institution must move toward owning its inventory of leased Steinways to maintain this standard,” said President Michael Hill.

To ease the transition from a leasing program to purchasing an inventory of instruments, the company has offered the Institution a small discount on the purchase of four pianos each year for the next four years. As soon as they learned of this situation, longtime Chautauquans Saul and Linda Ludwig of Cleveland stepped up to donate funds needed to purchase one of the Steinway pianos, a Boston Grand. The Ludwigs have closely watched and supported the Piano Program with great interest, meeting students every summer and getting to know the faculty over their 35 years of coming to the Institution.

Linda has studied piano all her life. The couple has a Steinway grand in their home in Cleveland. She goes to see all the piano master classes and marvels at how the capacity of Chautauqua to draw more and more talented students has grown in recent years. “The choice of artists who are teaching now is unbelievable,” she said. “We are so fortunate to have Sasha, Nikkii and John, and [artist-in-residence] Jon Nakamatsu — they all have such different strengths and it’s just great for the students!”

For his part, Saul Ludwig worked 45 years as an equity research analyst providing investment ideas to money managers nationwide. He was never a devotee of classical music until he became immersed in Chautauqua in 1985. Now, he is at his wife’s side for all the concerts and the ballet. As Gavrylyuk explained this summer to a group of Chautauquans who gathered in the Sherwood-Marsh Piano Studios to learn more about the new purchase program, “The best piano in the world gives the highest possible sphere of music-making. Chautauqua is the only place I do some teaching, and I feel most at home in Chautauqua with the Steinways.”

Artistic and Music Director Timothy Muffitt also spoke at the gathering: “We have to have Steinway pianos here. We are both a presenter and music professionals. The finest pianos are the Steinways. Anything else would compromise our results. The students we want are those who would be that particular about the instruments they play.”

Piano program co-chair Nikki Melville said to the attendees, “This is not just about pianos. These instruments are the pathways to music and to joy. Our students are trained to impact others with these tools.” Co-chair John Milbauer explained how each piano has its own character and exposes students to the quality of sound that is possible with such a massive instrument. “As they get used to better instruments, they open up to new sounds,” he said. Melville and Milbauer then sat side by side at two Steinway pianos that gleamed under the Sherwood-Marsh lights. They played four-hand duets by Dvořák that proved the power of the instruments with a ringing elegance. The two concluded their performance with a boisterous piece derived from Leonard Bernstein’s West Side Story. The percussive quality of the notes landed deep in the bones of those assembled and at least one person couldn’t help humming along at the familiar melodies. The audience erupted in applause at the last note.

Gavrylyuk then closed out the concert with Mozart’s Rondo in D major, K. 485, and the range of the Steinway under his nimble fingers was evident at every turn. Before the evening was over, Chautauquans Nancy Langston decided that donating funds to purchase the Model D piano that was played that evening would be an appropriate way to honor her late husband, Dick. Mary Davenport of Cary, North Carolina, committed to purchase two pianos for the practice shacks. Year-round residents Ted and Deb First made a significant gift toward the purchase of pianos that was added to by Chautauquans Nancy Waasdorp and Bob Jeffrey.

Later, Tim and Jennifer Kingston made a gift toward the effort and Edris Weiss, a longtime supporter, was inspired by comments from Nancy Langston to commit to purchase a Model M Steinway for the campaign.

“In all,” said Vice President of Advancement Geod Follansbee, “we made significant headway this season in our goal of purchasing 16 Steinways over four years. These seven beautiful instruments purchased to date are a tribute to the future of the Piano Program and, indeed, the entire School of Music at Chautauqua. This will help us secure the talents of the very best students.”

Those interested in contributing to this effort may inquire about the Steinway purchase program by contacting the Foundation at foundation@chq.org or 716-357-6220. As Follansbee noted, the sooner the pianos are purchased, the greater the discount that Steinway will provide to the Institution.
Three veteran fundraising professionals joined the advancement staff of the Institution this summer and spent the season getting to know donors and experiencing Chautauqua firsthand.

Three veteran fundraising professionals joined the advancement staff of the Institution this summer and spent the season getting to know donors and experiencing Chautauqua firsthand.

For one of these new leaders, Amy Gardner, joining the staff at Chautauqua was a homecoming. Gardner, who holds the new position of associate vice president for major and planned gifts, grew up in Mayville, attended Boys’ and Girls’ Club, and during college was a tour guide and Amphitheater staff member. Twenty years later, she says many things have changed at Chautauqua in very positive ways.

Gardner will divide her time between Chautauqua in the summers and Silver Spring, Maryland, the rest of the year. The Institution’s Washington, D.C., outpost will serve as her primary office. Gardner has three sons — ages 15, 13 and 9. “They were here for a few weeks this season, and we are all grateful for the opportunity to be here together for future summers to fully experience all that is Chautauqua,” she said.

Gardner began her career in the arts when she landed her first job in group sales at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. She didn’t know much about fundraising, she admitted. When a co-worker took her on a tour of the building and pointed out a meeting among the 40-person development staff, Amy asked, “What’s development?” She would soon learn, when she got an assignment to work in annual giving.

Later positions with Chorus America and Shakespeare Theatre Company in D.C. brought Gardner the opportunity to work with a broad array of board members and donors. She then moved full force into fundraising in higher education which further broadened her contacts in the humanities and sciences, and offered skills she now brings to the Institution.

“I hope Chautauquans will tell us what we are doing well, and what they’d like to see — how the new strategic plan will impact them personally. I also hope Chautauquans will keep an open mind. There is so much innovation coming down the line, but never at the expense of Chautauqua’s best traditions.”
“After a lifetime of accumulating resources, what is the legacy and gift to the future you want to create?”

From a giving perspective, we have many friends groups engaged with the arts at Chautauqua — people who contribute so much volunteer time and support the arts financially,” she said. “But the question here is the same as in communities throughout the country: How do we get more young people engaged in the arts? Tickets to performances are generally expensive,” she said. “For example, opera is a special art form that is being challenged financially. Baltimore lost its opera company, yet the arts continue to thrive and succeed in Europe. It’s a real priority there. Chautauqua is doing great work to secure the arts for future generations!”

Stitely noted that her youngest son, Gregg, who came to the grounds with her for two weeks this season, “was having a blast. He could not find enough superlatives to describe this place.” Stitely and her husband, Tim, have a blended family of four children ranging in ages from 13 to 20.

The daughter of a Methodist minister, Stitely watched as her father retired and went on to become a planned giving officer. “He thought I should also go into fundraising,” she explained. And eventually, she did.

Her most recent position before Chautauqua involved leading the planned giving effort in the Salvation Army’s Southern Territory. “For me,” Stitely said, “the thrill is talking to people in their later years and hearing their life stories — for example, men who served in World War II and experienced the world in ways they could never have anticipated, while women had opportunities to work during that era in jobs they had never done before.”

Stitely sees her work in gift planning as a way to help individuals examine their philanthropic priorities in light of the life they have lived. “After a lifetime of accumulating resources, what is the legacy and gift to the future you want to create? How often in your life do you get to say ‘this is me, this is who I am and what I want to see continue when I’m gone?’” she said. Florida Symphony Orchestra and was in awe of their gifts. Through that early exposure, dance became a passion that led her to join a dance company.

Now as the Chautauqua Foundation’s assistant vice president for advancement operations, Meyers says she feels like Dorothy having just landed in Oz. She and her husband were empty-nesters when the recruiter called and moving to Chautauqua year-round seemed like a great next step. The couple has four children, and the youngest two came to visit this past season — Melody, who is a college senior, and Merry, who is applying to art schools.

Meyers has worked in higher education most of her career — at Carnegie Mellon University, at the University of Florida and most recently at the University of Maryland. Earlier, she held positions at the Orlando Museum of Art and her Catholic high school alma mater. She and Amy Gardner knew each other while both working for the University of Maryland but were unaware that they had both been tapped for new, complementary positions with the Chautauqua Foundation.

“I am particularly moved by the mission of Chautauqua as Michael Hill has framed it,” Meyers said. “We take our mission to explore the best in human values and the enrichment of life back to our home communities. Chautauqua lives ‘back home,’ wherever that may be for folks. That is distinctive. We provide spiritual renewal and intellectual stimulation with world-class thinkers, and this new strategic plan takes Chautauqua back to its roots — to become a national movement once again and have an even greater impact on the world.”

For her part, Meyers manages Foundation operations from her office in the Colonnade, which includes overseeing efforts in donor relations and stewardship, communications, community engagement, events, research, gift processing, data management and the Chautauqua Fund. “I’m working on processes to keep our advancement team in step with each other, including those who work in other locations than Chautauqua. We must communicate well among ourselves, which can be a challenge, even when you are in the same building,” she said.

Meyers is also pleased to help carry part of the work that had been the sole purview of Vice President of Development Geof Follansbee. “Almost everybody in the development office used to report directly to Geof, and he found himself sometimes buried in administrivia. Taking care of functional areas will allow Geof to leverage his relationships that go back generations at Chautauqua,” she said.

“We provide spiritual renewal and intellectual stimulation with world-class thinkers, and this new strategic plan takes Chautauqua back to its roots — to become a national movement once again and have an even greater impact on the world.”

When the recruiter for Chautauqua called Debbie Meyers at her University of Maryland office, the caller asked straightaway if she had ever heard of Chautauqua Institution. Meyers’ face lit up as she told the story. “I had!” she explained. “I took a college course on the history of American popular culture and in the first four weeks of that class, we covered the story of Chautauqua. I never forgot it.” Meyers joked that thanks to that class, she had already conquered the challenge of spelling Chautauqua. “It’s easier to spell than Albuquerque,” she said, shaking her head.

Later, when Meyers found out that Chautauqua was the summer home of the internationally renowned dancer Patricia McBride, she was speechless. As a child, Meyers witnessed Edward Villella and McBride perform with the
For me, this is a very exciting time,” said Debbie Moore, current chief financial officer of the Chautauqua Foundation, who assumes the role of executive director of the Foundation in January 2020. “The Institution’s new strategic plan, 150 Forward, challenges assumptions, strives for improvement and envisions Chautauqua extending its impact nationwide. With the return of the development function to the Institution, we will revisit how we do everything at the Foundation. The shift makes sense for a lot of reasons: the Foundation’s operating budget will be significantly lower and advancement staff will work more closely with the Institution’s marketing, information technology and other departments to respond faster to initiatives coming from the board of trustees. The Foundation will turn its focus solely to managing endowment investments, stewarding the use of the endowment funds, and of course, will continue as active advocates for all fundraising, and especially for new endowment.”

When the Chautauqua Foundation was created in 1937 to protect the assets of the Chautauqua Institution in a time of serious financial retrenchment, fundraising operations remained under the Institution’s operations. Only in 1991 did the development office move under the auspices of the Foundation. “The Institution is now much stronger than it was back then,” Moore said, “but it is still important to keep a separate board to oversee our endowment and other investments. We can’t forget the lessons of the past.”

Chautauqua’s endowment funds are designed to provide support in perpetuity to Chautauqua Institution and are divided into different portfolios with specific objectives. The returns on these investments are used to serve donor-established purposes where specified, while unspecified funds may be applied to meet various objectives as determined by the Institution.

Foundation board member and investment committee chair Andrew Camden is a financial adviser by profession. He serves on the boards of the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan and the Detroit Institute of Arts. More than two decades ago, he and his wife, Gayle Shaw Camden, established an endowment fund to help protect Chautauqua’s tree canopy and to honor Gayle’s father, Walter C. Shaw, Jr.

Today, that fund has grown considerably and in large measure thanks to the strategic investments made by the Chautauqua Foundation.

“Our general mantra on the Foundation Board is that we focus on perpetual, long-term assets for the future,” Camden explained. “Fifteen years ago, we introduced many different asset classes — including private equity and hedge fund investments — but we did not realize back then how much this decision would reduce volatility, which has been very important to us.

“I remember when a $100 million endowment for Chautauqua seemed unachievable and now we are quickly getting there. To the extent that we can apply greater and greater endowment returns to our program investment, the less pressure the Institution has to increase gate ticket prices or other revenue streams.”

Chautauqua’s new strategic plan calls for growing the endowment to at least $125 million by the time the Institution celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2024. In the last 15 years — including the downturn in earnings caused by the recession of 2008 — Chautauqua’s endowment assets grew from a market value of $41.2 million in 2004 to $92.7 million in 2019.

Both Moore and Camden praised Hirtle Callaghan and Co., the Philadelphia firm that the Foundation contracts with to perform the duties of outsourced chief investment officer. “Their infrastructure constantly evolves and they really are a state-of-the-art firm,” Camden said.

Pete Holway is a principal and investment officer at Hirtle Callaghan. He serves clients in Ohio, western New York and western Pennsylvania. “These days,” Holway said, “you can’t constrain portfolios to conventional equity and fixed income investments and meet the goals for a traditional 7.5% return required by foundations like Chautauqua’s. We and our clients have to think outside the box and be willing to look at alternative investment strategies, which is what we and the investment committee have done. It has been a very productive 20-plus year collaborative effort.”

Holway, a former football player at Kent State, is immersed in the world of philanthropy through his 25-year career with Hirtle Callaghan and in his volunteer activities. He currently serves as chair of his alma mater’s investment committee. Holway is also a dedicated Chautauquan and has a summer home in Bemus Point. His family recently filled an entire bench in the Amphitheater at the Diana Ross concert this past season. “We loved it!” he said.

“At Hirtle Callaghan, we are not day traders,” Holway continued. “We and our clients are investors in perpetuity with a much longer time horizon. We pioneered the idea of an outsourced chief investment officer and investment staff, and work with over 50 institutions of higher education in that role as well as numerous other private and public foundations and endowments.” Seventy percent of the firm’s clients are institutional and the balance are families and family offices. “We have $20 billion in assets under supervision, which enables us to garner access to institutional quality, global investment strategies for our clients with advantageous cost structures,” he added.

Hirtle Callahan’s clients include Scripps Research Institute in

---

**Endowment Investment Portfolio**

The endowment investment portfolio, represented in thousands, has grown by $51.4 million over the past 15 years.
Herb's generosity is over the top. We have received so many extra gifts in honor of his efforts.” — Tina Downey

Building where the Philadelphia Inquirer was headquartered. “He was a sweet, dear man with a huge amount of talent,” Herb said. And strangely, his father was known to hum a dissonant tune whenever he was concentrating on his work. “I believe he heard all kinds of music in his head,” Herb said.

Young Herb went to Temple University on a full scholarship and spent his summers performing on stages in the once popular constellation of summer resorts in the Catskills known as the “Borscht Belt.” His parents held out hope that Herb would become a doctor, and their son dutifully applied to several medical schools while he was still dreaming of Broadway. One day, while he was performing away from home, he got a call from his grandmother (his parents could not use a telephone) telling Herb that a student at the Hanerahan Medical College in Philadelphia couldn’t handle the anatomy class and had abruptly dropped out. They offered Herb the open spot.

“I accepted,” Herb said wistfully, shrugging his shoulders. He would complete his residency in New York City and go on to become the co-chair of obstetrics and gynecology at a large Long Island hospital. His civilian life was interrupted by the Vietnam War. Herb was drafted and served a two-year tour of duty delivering babies at an Army base in Georgia. After witnessing many of the new mothers who were his patients become widows because of the conflict, Herb came to oppose the war.

Eventually Herb and his wife, Barbara, would move to San Antonio, Texas, where they raised six children. In the last half of his medical career, Herb gave up private practice and began traveling the country delivering babies among at-risk populations — Native American mothers on reservations and migrant workers in agricultural camps. When he was 79 years old, Herb worked one weekend for 72 hours straight in the delivery room. Seeing his fatigue at the end of this stint, Barbara told her husband it was time to retire. “You can’t keep this up,” she said. Keyser was an obstetrician for 50 years and delivered some 8,000 babies.

By this time, the Keyser had become devoted Chautauquans. Their first invitation to visit the Institution came from Harvey Biskin, then principal bass of the Chautauqua and San Antonio symphonies. The couple came to grounds on the way home from Tanglewood — their usual summer destination for music. After a few days they were hooked, though it took 10 years before Barbara agreed to spend an entire season on the grounds. They bought their home on Ames in 1995. Barbara thought it was crazy to buy a place for nine weeks of the year and the house needed to be gutted. Herb did some architectural research in the Institution’s archives and decided he wanted to restore the original porches that had gone missing. This home is where Herb Keyser now makes his famous lemon tarts. He has three refrigerators, an excellent stove and a license from the local health department.

Now at 86, Herb and Barbara continue their energetic life of many interests and passions. They travel often, a habit cemented by their extraordinary, five-week, first-hand study of lemon tarts as prepared by 14 chefs in Paris, which became Herb’s 2005 book, A Chautauquan Searches Paris for the Best Tarte au Citron. Part cookbook and part travelogue, the popular volume is sold in the Chautauqua Bookstore and all proceeds go to the bottom line of Chautauqua’s annual fund.

To date, Herb has raised more than $65,000 for the Institution’s annual operating budget through sales of the book and his exceptional desserts. Three earlier books — one on the joys of international travel and two on the hazards of American medicine as practiced in some quarters — had already established Herb as a seasoned writer and resulted in the author’s appearance on HBO, CNN, Ted Koppel’s “Nightline” program and other national media outlets. After mastering the lemon tart, however, Herb turned back to his first love, showbusiness, and produced Geniuses of the American Musical Theatre: The Composers and Lyricists, a collection of 28 biographies of the major players in the golden days of Broadway.
“Chautauqua is very fortunate to have such an experienced and dedicated team of asset managers working for the Institution,” said Geof Follansbee, the Foundation’s CEO. “Over the years, Hirtle Callaghan primarily served non-profit organizations and families with wealth management services — including some of our Chautauqua families — and it was their confidence in the firm that led the Foundation to our current relationship.” It is a relationship that Follansbee, Moore and the board credit with helping Chautauqua be a good steward of the many, generous gifts to endowment that the Foundation has received over the years.

**FUND from p. 11**

His latest work is fiction. *An Unquiet Life: Odyssey of a Whistleblower* is a thriller that dramatizes the blowback experienced by those who have dared to criticize the institutions of American medicine. Because of his writing, Herb has become a popular lecturer on cruise ships. He and Barbara took seven cruises in 2018. They also still make regular pilgrimages to Broadway to see all the shows. Herb’s all-time favorite is *Les Misérables*. “There’s nothing else like it,” he said. And though his love of show business remains strong, it is now manifest through son Chris, whose career in Hollywood has included a stint as president of the Writers Guild of America. Chris currently has two new TV shows in production.

Herb cooks only at Chautauqua, never back home in Texas. “If you learn to do one thing and do it over and over, you can become an expert,” he said. “It is very relaxing to me to be in the kitchen. I don’t get fatigued.” During each week of the summer, he sells everything he makes on Mondays and takes special orders for the balance of the week. “The curd has to sit for 24 to 36 hours, and the pastry has to be made and chilled overnight,” he says. He buys eggs by 10 dozen lots and lemons wholesale by the crate. “Herb has been an indefatigable advocate for the Chautauqua Fund,” said Geof Follansbee, vice president of development. “His enthusiasm and his hours of time spent in the kitchen rather than at programs on the grounds are a testament to his understanding of Chautauqua’s reliance on the support of many to keep the Institution flourishing.”

Chautauqua Fund Director Tina Downey agrees. “Herb’s generosity is over the top. We have received so many extra gifts in honor of his efforts — people who slip in another hundred dollars in their gift and mention their appreciation for Herb. This is my 13th year at Chautauqua and Herb was making the tarts before I came on board. He’s perfected the art of the tart, he’s redone his kitchen, donated proceeds to the Chautauqua Foundation as its chief financial officer at the end of 2011. “It is an incredible honor and very humbling to be offered this new position,” she said. “Geof Follansbee has been a strong and tireless leader for the Foundation. I respect him so much. Now he will be able to focus exclusively on fundraising, which is his gift to Chautauqua. His roots here are very deep.”

**LEADERSHIP from p. 10**

California and Berea College in Kentucky, which — because of its free tuition policy — requires that a significant portion of its operating budget come from philanthropy and endowment.

**Best of Both Worlds**

Debbie Moore grew up on Chautauqua Lake. Her mother and father, Jane and Doug Conroe, bought their Maple Springs home next to her grandparents’ cottage when Debbie was 5. Doug Conroe served as director of operations for the Institution for 30 years, retiring in 2014, and is now executive director of the Chautauqua Lake Association, where Debbie has served as the association’s volunteer treasurer since 2004. Her mother, Jane, is a retired science teacher and also deeply engaged in the effort to improve the health of the lake, previously working as a conservationist at the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy in retirement.

Debbie earned her MBA at the University of Buffalo in 1998 and began her career in public accounting at Buffamante, Whipple & Buttafaro, P.C. in Jamestown, where she earned her CPA license and primarily focused on auditing services for non-profit, government and manufacturing clients, including many local foundations. She then worked at the U.S. headquarters of Truck-Lite Company, a subsidiary of Penske Corporation, where she was responsible for the standard costing system, manufacturing budgets and profit margin analysis. She came to the Chautauqua Foundation as its chief financial officer at the end of 2011. “It is an incredible honor and very humbling to be offered this new position,” she said. “Geof Follansbee has been a strong and tireless leader for the Foundation. I respect him so much. Now he will be able to focus exclusively on fundraising, which is his gift to Chautauqua. His roots here are very deep.”

“Herb has been an indefatigable advocate for the Chautauqua Fund,” said Geof Follansbee, vice president of development. “His enthusiasm and his hours of time spent in the kitchen rather than at programs on the grounds are a testament to his understanding of Chautauqua’s reliance on the support of many to keep the Institution flourishing.”

Chautauqua Fund Director Tina Downey agrees. “Herb’s generosity is over the top. We have received so many extra gifts in honor of his efforts — people who slip in another hundred dollars in their gift and mention their appreciation for Herb. This is my 13th year at Chautauqua and Herb was making the tarts before I came on board. He’s perfected the art of the tart, he’s redone his kitchen, donated proceeds from his book sales, and this year he invited Chautauquans to make a donation and come to his house to see a demonstration of his baking techniques. He just keeps going!”

“To have chosen to stay in Chautauqua County and to find such a position here is a dream come true,” she added. Debbie and her husband, Jeff, and their two sons get out on the water as much as possible whether by boat, kayak or jet ski. “The role that Chautauqua plays in the region is so important to me,” Debbie continued. “And now, Michael Hill’s national vision is exciting to contemplate. The level and variety of experiences among the people who come to Chautauqua are astonishing. The world comes to me through Chautauqua. It’s the best of both worlds — the lake life and my work at the Institution.”
In 1973, Lynn and Rich Moschel moved from Cincinnati to Western New York. Rich worked for an institutional textile manufacturer and was assigned to cover the territory from Western New York to Southern Ontario for his firm. Lynn, trained as a librarian, worked for the Amherst Public Libraries in Amherst, New York, and was responsible for children’s programming, a position she held for 20 years.

“That was when we first heard about Chautauqua Institution,” Rich explained, “but the place was in a pretty run-down state. Lynn and I said to each other that we didn’t know why anyone would want to vacation there.”

Fast forward to 1984. Rich was training to run the Buffalo Marathon and got acquainted with a runner from Cleveland at a spaghetti dinner the night before the race. At the starting line the next day, the two men found themselves side by side. At the end of the day, Rich’s new friend said, “Why don’t you and Lynn come to Chautauqua over Christmas?” The Moschels decided to give it a try.

By that time, Chautauqua was experiencing a resurgence and the Moschels were so taken with the place that they bought a condo under construction. “We'd never spent a night on the grounds in the regular season,” Rich said, “but that's how impressed we were with the place.”

The Moschels initially used the condo as an investment and rented it out for most weeks of the season. “Ours was the usual story,” Lynn added, “we’d stay for a weekend… then it become a week, then two weeks and so on.”

By 1997, the Moschels had bought and completely renovated a house on Miller Avenue, and in 2002 they moved to the grounds year-round. Rich joined the Chautauqua Volunteer Fire Department and later became treasurer of the Chautauqua Utility District. Lynn served on the board of the Opera Guild. She also accepted an invitation from Kit Trapasso, director of the Children’s School, to become the school’s librarian and volunteered in a second-grade classroom at Chautauqua Lake Central School during the rest of the year. Rich was one of the founders of the Everett Jewish Life Center at Chautauqua and served as president of the Hebrew Congregation. The couple has contributed to the Institution in many ways over the years. Yet, their most rewarding experience every year, the Moschels said, is “adopting” an opera student for the season. “We get more out of it than we give and enjoy befriending wonderful young artists pursuing their dream,” Lynn said.

Having been introduced to opera as a child by her mother, Lynn rebelled for a time against the art form, but the Chautauqua Opera Company and the Young Artist Program soon won her over. “For both of us, it’s the people who make the music. They are so devoted to their craft. They work so hard and stay so busy every summer,” Lynn said.

When Lynn’s mother, Miriam Goodman, who was also a devoted Chautauquan, turned 100 in 2011, her friends and fellow Chautauquans are always there to lend a helping hand, whether it be planting flowers in the Moschels’ yard, helping unpack when they arrive, sharing a meal together or just sitting on their porch enjoying each other’s company.

Eager to enjoy performances each summer, the Moschels have become enamored of the contemporary operas produced under the leadership of General and Artistic Director Steven Osgood. Lynn says that Hydrogen Jukebox was so intriguing to them that they bought tickets to the second performance after seeing the first. “The opera As One was also moving to us, and we learned so much about the transgender experience,” Lynn said.

In celebration of the 90th anniversary of Chautauqua Opera this year, the couple has made a legacy gift to support the company by establishing the Rich and Lynn Moschel Opera Endowment. The Moschels’ planned gift, funded through an IRA, will support opera in perpetuity. “It is so important to preserve the art form, especially at Chautauqua,” Lynn said. “Opera is music, voices, costumes, the sets — it is the complete art form that reflects all of the performing arts at the Institution. We want to see opera continue here long after we’re gone.”

“My mother was blown away.”

In 2013, Lynn suffered a devastating accident that left her with a severe spinal cord injury. After the accident, Chautauqua only became more important to the Moschels. In the face of what has become years of challenging physical therapy and treatments for Lynn, the Moschels have even more fully experienced what they call the true spirit of Chautauqua — a community that cares for its members. Though they had to give up their year-round status as Chautauquans, Rich and Lynn now manage to come for 10 weeks in the summer between her ongoing rehabilitation with trainers back in Cincinnati and Atlanta, Georgia.

“Being at Chautauqua is a major part of my recovery,” Lynn said. “People are so helpful and encouraging.”

Choking back emotion, Rich told how his friends in the fire department immediately built a ramp for Lynn’s wheelchair, sailing through approval with the Architectural Review Board, and had it ready when they first arrived back on the grounds after the accident. Though the couple was able to stay only for a week during the year after Lynn’s injury, she is much improved now. Lynn walks short distances with crutches and is able to navigate the grounds on her scooter. Each year, friends and fellow Chautauquans are always there to lend a helping hand, whether it be planting flowers in the Moschels’ yard, helping unpack when they arrive, sharing a meal together or just sitting on their porch enjoying each other’s company.

A Legacy Gift for Opera: 
LYNN AND RICH MОСCHEL

“Opera is music, voices, costumes, the sets — it is the complete art form that reflects all of the performing arts at the Institution. We want to see opera continue here long after we’re gone.”

— Lynn Moschel

Back right, Caitlin Lynch as the ghost of Marie Antoinette watches French aristocrats sing their sorrows while waiting to be beheaded during the Chautauqua Opera Company’s performance of The Ghosts of Versailles on July 27, 2019.
Tim Renjilian addressing a group of Chautauquans at a Board of Trustees community gathering in the Hall of Christ.

“We intend to be in close contact with the donor community and other stakeholders, serving as effective representatives of their interests in the success of Chautauqua.”

— Tim Renjilian

Chautauqua’s endowment assets are presently allocated across a diverse range of assets, including stocks in emerging and developed markets, private equity, hedge funds and bonds.

Receptive to changing times while recognizing the greatest good for Chautauqua is achieved through robust growth, Renjilian noted that in recent years a number of donors have expressed an interest focusing on the environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards of the corporations in Chautauqua’s portfolio of investments.

“Some donors want to ensure that endowment funds are invested in companies that align with certain values, so we now offer an ESG option for new endowment funds,” he said. “The new ESG option is just one example of our focus on meeting the needs and expectations of our donors to endowment. We want to continue to find new ways to communicate more effectively, to provide even more timely and relevant information, and to make clear to our donors that we are good stewards of their resources.”

Of the January 2020 appointment of current Foundation Chief Financial Officer Debbie Moore as executive director of the Foundation, Renjilian said, “Debbie has been with the organization as CFO for a while now, and she is incredibly well-respected by the Foundation board. She has tremendous expertise, knowledge and care for the Institution. She was the first person we thought of to assume leadership in this new structure. She is committed to improving operations and responding quickly to our donors.”

Renjilian noted that the restructuring is also intended to allow Geof Follansbee to concentrate his efforts on the advancement team’s ambitious fundraising goals that are necessary to accomplish the objectives within the strategic plan.

The concurrent investment in added staff reflects the primary goal of growing the donor base and identifying additional sources for endowment. Regarding the heightened investment in staff and the quest for new sources of philanthropy, Renjilian noted that the Foundation and the Institution “aim to be thoughtful and honest about what’s working and what’s not,” during the transition.

“Retaining two boards really helps to keep in place our accountability and discipline,” he added.