

My name is Anne Pitcher and I'm the director of the Center for Ethics and World Societies here at Colgate University. On behalf of my colleague, Jill Tiefenthaler, the director of the Upstate Institute, and myself, we would like to welcome you to the first annual upstate cities conference. We thank the Mayor of Hamilton, Sue McVaugh, for attending this event and offering to give a tour of Hamilton this afternoon after the conference.

Many of you have traveled from Rochester, from Binghamton, Buffalo and even Raleigh, NC and Burlington, Vermont to attend this conference. You have left demanding jobs in the forest service, in government and academia to share your ideas with others here and we greatly appreciate your efforts.

This conference arises from the mutual and overlapping interests of the Upstate Institute and the Center for Ethics and World Societies here at Colgate University. Formed several years ago, the Upstate Institute seeks to strengthen linkages between the scholarly pursuits of faculty at Colgate, the interests of students, and the upstate area. It fosters collaborative projects that will promote regional development and well being. Thus, for the Upstate Institute a conference such as this is a natural extension of the Institute's mission.

As the Director of the Center for Ethics and World Societies, I also saw this conference as a central component of the Center's objectives for the year. The annual theme of the Center this year was Cities, Citizenship and Modernity. Since September, we have sponsored lectures on struggles for rights to the city in Sao Paolo Brazil, the destruction of heritage sites in Baghdad, Iraq, the transformation of Bombay under the British, and the reinvention of contemporary Berlin. In March, we heard a sobering analysis of the challenges facing the re-birth and re-development of rust belt cities including Syracuse and Buffalo by Doug Rae of Yale University. So it seems obvious, some would say obligatory, that we devote a day to examining cities and towns that are a little closer to home.

Today, we have brought together mayors, businesspeople, social workers, community developers, architects, foresters, political scientists, sociologists and economists to focus on the problems and prospects for cities in upstate NY. Some of us are here because we have been inspired by the transformation of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and we seek to understand and apply the business principles that were behind urban revitalization in those cities to Albany or Rome or Buffalo. Some of us are here because we are alarmed by the gentrification and homogenization that is taking place in Washington DC, Providence, or the South Street Seaport in Manhattan, and we are promoting alternative approaches that stress community involvement and participation in city planning and development. Some of us recognize that the environmental quality of cities is just as important as its cultural offerings, and we emphasize the importance of urban forests, parks and recreation, and landscape architecture in any plans for urban revitalization. Some of us see the benefits of greater university-city collaboration in those urban areas

that are fortunate enough to have a college or university in their proximity. And lastly, there are those of us who just want to live in a city!

The conference tries to combine many of the concerns we share about upstate NY and many of the hopes we have for its future. We have basically divided the conference into three themes which you can see on your program- University and Community Partnerships, Urban Greening Strategies in the morning. Following a lunchtime address by our keynote speaker, Luke Bierman, the Director of the Institute for Emerging Issues of NC State, we will have our third panel on urban and community development strategies. Each panel has a moderator who will introduce the panelists. Each panelist will have about 15 minutes to present his or her themes or approaches regarding the challenges he or she has faced, the practices used, what the experience was like, and how stakeholders were identified. Any remaining time is free for questions. We ask that you save your questions until all of the panelists have finished presenting their material. Following the afternoon panel, we will have a short wrap-up session where hopefully we can think of ways in which to build on the ideas generated at today's conference. After that session, we will have a tour of Hamilton conducted by our mayor, Sue McVaugh.

Before we get started, I would like to thank our project consultant, Caryn Tomljanovich for working with Jill and me to put this conference together, contacting everyone, and handling the day to day details. I would also like to thank Diane Beach for her support and the Colgate bookstore for agreeing to host the event.

In closing, let me say that it is rather fitting that we are having a conference on upstate cities in the same week that we heard the news that Jane Jacobs died. As everyone here knows, Jacobs' 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* is a classic in the field of urban studies and laid the groundwork for what one writer (Hank Bromley) has called a "frontal assault" on the 1950s and 1960s conceptualizations of "urban renewal" which left us with sprawling freeways, strip malls, and lifeless cities. The themes of our conference echo the alternatives that Jacobs proposed nearly 50 years ago so I would like to think she would be pleased with what we are doing today.

Welcome everyone.