

**Economic Development, University Style:
How Universities Answer the Community
Developer's Wish, and Assist Business**

by
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Introduction: Universities as Economic Engines

Imagine a community Chamber of Commerce that decided to start a strategic planning process for economic development, including the following principles and priorities. First, they want to recruit an enterprise that would produce a product or service of which everyone could be proud. Second, they want an enterprise whose employees are highly educated and willing to be active in community organizations. Third, they want an enterprise that is respectful of the environment. Fourth, they want an enterprise willing to partner with the schools, civic community, and businesses. Fifth, they want an enterprise that would have a significant and positive impact on the economy through taxes paid and both operating and capital expenditures.

Well, in Garden City, that enterprise is Adelphi University, whose annual budget of over \$100 million easily translates into an annual impact of one-third of a billion dollars, without counting the results of over \$100 million in capital expenditures in place and projected for the not-so-distant future.

In addition, the university collected FICA, federal, and state income taxes, and other taxes of \$15.5 million in 2003. When one adds in the restaurant, hotel, and other expenditures of those who visit campus during the year for Homecoming, Reunion, cultural events, graduation, and sports events, the economic impacts grows even larger. And Adelphi is one of nineteen colleges and universities on Long Island, whose annual operating expenses of over \$2.5 billion translate into a \$7.5 billion impact, without counting over \$500 million in projected capital investments. Then, add in the expenditures of nearly 150,000 students and 30,000 employees to the regional economy.

But this is not all. While higher education is a major economic force on Long Island, for sure, our institutions are more than economic engines in and of themselves. Our institutions are not simply models, or examples; they also are teachers and partners whose intellectual, cultural, and capital assets spur economic and community development.

Intellectual Assets

The curriculum and scholarly and artistic interests of faculty are the essential assets of a university,

organized to prepare students and challenge orthodoxy to ensure a dynamic future. Just think about how universities contribute to meeting the five strategic goals of Nassau County, including: (1) High tech/high skill industry growth; (2) Downtown revitalization; (3) Workforce and senior housing expensation; (4) Brownfields redevelopment; and (5) open space preservation and promotion of tourism. For example, these are the programs and activities we cited in our response to Nassau County Executive Tom Suozzi last year.

High-tech/high skill Industry

1. Adelphi offers B.S. and M.S. programs in biology with curricula encompassing a spectrum of topics including molecular, cellular, and ecological biology.
2. The bachelor's program in computer science prepares students for careers in computer-related industries.
3. The B.S. program in physics offers curricula in advanced research including energy, laser, optics, and theoretical physics.
4. The B.S. program in biochemistry prepares students for advanced degrees or careers in related fields

- such as pharmaceutical industry and food science.
5. The School of Business offers B.B.A. and M.B.A. programs with specialization in management information systems.
 6. We offer a bachelor's degree with a concentration in forensic anthropology. Students are strongly encouraged to participate in ethnographic archaeological and physical anthropological endeavors. The field of anthropology is closely related to a number of other offerings at Adelphi, thus providing many opportunities for double majors, especially in the education and training of environmental studies.
 7. We offer joint degree programs in engineering—an integrated five-year program (three years at Adelphi and two years at the cooperating institution) leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in physics from Adelphi and a Bachelor of Science degree in an engineering field from colleges and universities including, Columbia University, Polytechnic University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and Stevens Institute of Technology.
 8. Students can take a combined five-year computer science program with Adelphi and Polytechnic University. After earning a bachelor's degree in the liberal arts at Adelphi, students earn an M.S. degree in computer science after one year at Polytechnic University.
 9. KWEA—Knowledge Workers Education Alliance—is a U.S. Department of Education-supported program to smooth students' transition to graduate study in order to produce more graduates in computing and engineering; partners are Adelphi, Polytechnic, Manhattanville, Marymount Manhattan, St. Francis, and St. Joseph's Colleges.
 10. Adelphi has a Biotech Advisory consisting of high-level people working in the biotech field. They include people from the Pall Corporation, Sloan Kettering, Ortek International, and Enzo Biochem, Inc. They are advising the College of Arts and Sciences on the development of improved biotechnology curricula.
 11. Various in-the-field and laboratory research involving forensic archaeological and palaeo-environmental collaborative projects in several Mediterranean countries and in Thailand are available. These projects are all funded by grants (including the National Science Foundation) and include collaboration with other higher education institutions.
 12. Adelphi has been selected to participate in phase II of the SAILS (Standardized

Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) project. SAILS was developed by Kent State University with continuing development and testing under a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The project, coordinated by the Association of Research Libraries, aims to create a tool to measure information literacy and assess its impact on student learning. SAILS has been endorsed by the Association of Research Libraries Statistics and Measurement Committee as part of its New Measures Initiative.

Downtown Revitalization

1. Adelphi's bachelor's degree in sociology offers a variety of courses related to downtown revitalization issues—race relations, comparative community studies, social change, and more.
2. The School of Social Work bachelor's and M.S.W. curricula reflect its strong commitment to improving the quality of life of individuals and communities.
3. The School of Business offers bachelor's and M.B.A. programs where students learn how to apply managerial leadership and technical skills to communities around them.

Workforce and Senior Housing

1. The bachelor's program in sociology offers courses examining work and family issues within a sociological context.
2. The bachelor's and M.S.W. programs at the School of Social Work prepare students for practice in the complex and varied social welfare and human service fields, including working with seniors.
3. Adelphi's School of Nursing contributes to the health and welfare of Long Island and the economy through its bachelor's and master's degree programs preparing professional and graduate nurses, and through its special initiative with Parker (AU-PJI Centers for Gerontological Care).
4. The School of Nursing also provides continuing education programs and refresher courses for those who wish to return to nursing after being out of the workforce for many years.
5. Since 1999, the School of Education has been working with teachers from the Roosevelt School District on science, math, and technology instruction.
6. The School of Education received a grant to encourage the teaching of math and sciences and is recruiting students from Nassau

Community College (with a focus on minority students) to become math/science teachers in low-income communities.

Brownfields Redevelopment

1. Adelphi offers B.S. and M.S. degrees in environmental sciences with curricula pertaining to related issues such as environmental policy, biology, and chemical quantitative analysis.
2. Two collaborative programs with Columbia University in environmental studies are offered: One is a five-year program (three years at Adelphi plus two years at Columbia) to earn both a B.A. in environmental studies at Adelphi and a B.S. in earth and environmental engineering from Columbia. The second program is a six-year program (four years at Adelphi plus two years at Columbia University) to earn both a broad-based B.A. in environmental studies and an M.S. in earth resources engineering from Columbia. In the spirit of "research for conservation and good stewardship of the earth," Adelphi University and Columbia University have agreed to cooperate in joint research activities, exchange faculty and students for research, and extend invitations to scholars for

joint lectures, colloquia, and symposia.

3. A collaborative program between Adelphi's environmental studies and anthropology programs exists with Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico's programs in landscape architecture (including planning and architectural design).

Open Space Preservation and Promotion of Tourism

1. Adelphi's health/physical education bachelor's and master's programs offer courses in sport management (including events management), sport media, and community and leisure study.
2. Adelphi's arts and performing arts programs offer a wide range of courses in theater, dance, music, arts, and fine arts. Theater, dance, and music productions and arts and sculpture exhibitions at Adelphi are open to the public.¹

In addition, we have created the Long Island Vital Signs project to monitor social health indicators in the region; we are working closely with the Rauch Foundation-sponsored Long Island Index project; we have created the Center for Global Studies, directed by Professor Pearl Kamer; we have created a Center for Victims Studies

for the treatment of all sorts of traumas; and we work closely with the Long Island Works Coalition. We sponsor the Center for Psychological Services and the Speech and Hearing Clinic; we offer a new master's degree program in mental health counseling, and we host SCORE, the retired executives group that consults with small businesses. We do all this in addition to adult education in Garden City, Hauppauge, Manhattan, and Poughkeepsie. With several business groups and companies, we are providing student interns and faculty consultants to businesses, social service agencies, and government bodies.

Other programs contributing to the economy and community welfare include the Adelphi New York State Breast Cancer Hotline; new programs in emergency management, gerontology, and early childhood education; and ongoing programs in the sciences, business, communications, the arts, social work, psychology, and education.

Adelphi's Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (School of Education) prepares master's and doctoral level students to enter the health care profession by staffing hospitals, clinics, and agencies with professional speech-language pathologists and audiologists. As the population changes, more and more attention is given to speech, language, and hearing disorders affecting the very youngest and the very oldest segments of the community.

We are major providers of professionals in the health care industry that employs almost 136,000 workers on Long Island, and Adelphi graduates teach over 90,000 New York school children each day. Our Outreach to Suffolk County includes a master's degree program in Speech-Language Pathology at St. Joseph's College. To round out this sampling of initiatives, we are in the early stages of designing a Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Governance so as to help the large non-profit sector and its funders.

At the request of the board and administration of the Village of Garden City, Adelphi University's School of Social Work Professor Regina Tracy, with students and Adelphi colleagues, completed a survey to assess the needs of the Village's aging senior population. The survey identified the gaps in senior services and suggested ways to address them.

Through a GEAR UP grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Adelphi is providing extensive mentoring, tutoring, and professional development services to boost college enrollment rates among low-income students from the Roosevelt and Hempstead school districts. Adelphi has worked closely with the school districts since 2000 to provide nearly 500 students in the class of 2005 with such programs as academic tutoring, SAT preparation, college tours, and financial aid workshops.

Of course, a major question for universities these days is, what happens to your graduates? I am happy to report that, based on our survey results, "the vast majority of Adelphi graduates are currently working full time (ranging from a low of 74% of baccalaureate graduates...to a high of 91% of doctoral respondents...² or baccalaureate respondents, the most frequently cited reason for not working was continuing one's education."³

"In the most recent survey, 61% of baccalaureate respondents and 39% of master's degree respondents work on Long Island, while 32% of the former and 49% of the latter work in New York City...doctoral respondents are more likely to work in New York City than on Long Island."⁴ Another measure of our impact on Long Island is represented by the fact that about 40% of our alumni live in the region.

However, the most fundamental way in which universities' intellectual assets contribute to economic and community development is through general and expert education, history and imagination, writing, speaking, critical reading, and listening.

Cultural Assets

The cultural calendar indicates a portion of the lectures, dance programs, dramatic productions, and art exhibits we make available to the community as well as the campus. We have been told that these programs, in addition

to other services, help make Garden City a desirable place to buy real estate and open a business. In addition to these programs, we host the Critical Issues breakfast series with elected officials and the Telecare program on ethics and critical choices with Monsignor Tom Hartman and Rabbi Marc Gellman. We also cosponsor programs with WHO on health—such as infectious diseases—and with ERASERacism on the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on “*Brown vs. Board of Education and the Unfinished Agenda.*” This multiple-site program will attempt to educate Long Islanders both on-and off-campus.

The Everyday Heroes Program, cosponsored with *Newsday*, recognizes those individuals who go above and beyond their everyday jobs to improve the life chances of others. The Adelphi Prize for Leadership is a partnership between the University, the Village of Garden City, and the Garden City School Board to encourage young people to be involved in community service, and to recognize those who exemplify the best in voluntarism. Our annual Hagedorn Lecture of Corporate Social Responsibility brings attention to the critical issues of ethics and corporate behavior.

Finally, the Sports Leadership Institute works with high school

and college athletes and coaches to help young people develop character and avoid violence against themselves and others.

Capital Assets

The buildings, grounds, and equipment of Adelphi and other universities are made available to the corporate and civic community for meetings, conferences, and retreats. Our extensive multi-media facilities can host inter-continental conferences and our residence halls can host “sleep away” retreats for executives and others.

We partner with other groups to host and facilitate symposia on business, health, and environmental topics; we offer adult fitness and cardiac rehabilitation services to the community; we accommodate the children of working parents as well as students in our Child Activities Center; and we cosponsor conferences with partners such as Parker Jewish Institute for Rehabilitation, North Shore-Long Island Jewish Medical Center, and the World Health Organization of the U.N.

Of course, we also use the capital assets of others, as when we offer degree programs at FedEx and McGraw-Hill, and use communications technologies to offer degree programs at distant sites.

The capital assets of colleges and universities are an important contributor to local economies. For example, the proposed capital bond issue for private higher education in the New York State budget is projected to result in \$1 billion in improvements, and nearly 11,500 new jobs, with \$125 million and 1,410 new jobs on Long Island alone.

Conclusion

Universities are teachers, models, and partners in economic and community development. We use our intellectual, cultural, and capital assets to prepare professionals, managers, and artists; contribute to the quality of life that attracts and sustains businesses; and to create jobs and wealth. This is economic development, university style, the community developer’s dream partner, and why we call Adelphi the “engaged” university—in Garden City, Manhattan, Poughkeepsie, and Hauppauge.

Footnotes

¹ Special Report of Nava Lerer, Director, Office of Research and Planning, Adelphi University, June 2, 2003

² Hicks, Raymond. Adelphi University Office of Research and Planning, “Student Jobs Survey.” Email report of January 21, 2004.

³ Op.cit.

⁴ Ibid.