Dear Friends,

This has been an exciting year at Heller.

The biggest news, of course, is the opening of the new Irving Schneider and Family Building. The new building enhances Heller’s collegial atmosphere for students, faculty, and staff, and the majestic Rhonda S. and Michael J. Zinner Forum provides an architectural signature and a space where the Heller community gathers frequently. We are grateful to Irving Schneider, his daughters Lynn and Mindy, our board members, and others whose generosity enabled Heller to develop a space worthy of what occurs in the school each day as knowledge is used and generated to advance social justice.

Once the renovation of the Heller-Brown building is completed in the fall, Heller faculty and staff who have been located in satellite offices on campus will be reunited with the rest of the Heller community in one common space for the first time in decades.

HELLER’S EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Heller is recruiting for the inaugural class of its newest program, the Master of Public Policy in social policy (MPP). The program will provide students with the skills necessary to design innovative solutions to society’s most critical problems. Graduates will design social policy, draft effective legislation, understand how values shape policies, study finance mechanisms, and use social science techniques to evaluate programs.

Heller’s MBA program, under the leadership of Professor Jody Hoffer Gittell, has recently announced a relationship with Sage Publications that will support Heller MBA students with full tuition scholarships. This prestigious award allows Heller to attract and reward academic and practice excellence. The first awards were made this spring.

Heller is embarking on a fundraising campaign to honor Eli Segal ’64, a late board member whose life and passion were devoted to public service. The Eli J. Segal Citizen Leadership Program will provide summer internships for Brandeis undergraduates and for selected MPP students that will jump-start careers and values in civic engagement.
We are preparing to launch our new Aging Services concentration in the MPP program, and have added a concentration in Aging Policy and Management to the Heller MBA program. This meets a critical and growing need for trained and motivated policymakers and managers in the field of aging and returns Heller to its roots of being a leader in aging policy.

We have formed a strategic partnership with Hebrew SeniorLife (HSL) to develop and deliver these concentrations. HSL provides an integrated, seven-site system of senior health care, housing, research and education in the greater Boston area.

The newly renamed Schneider Institutes for Health Policy now includes the Institute on Healthcare Systems and the Institute for Behavioral Health (IBH). Under the leadership of Professor Constance Horgan, IBH has overseen recent studies on the cost of psychotherapeutic drugs and the use of the Internet as a source for behavioral health information. A director for the Institute on Healthcare Systems is being recruited and we hope to share news soon of additional dynamic leadership for our health care efforts. Stan Wallack continues as director of the Institutes.

HELLER ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Heller’s Programs in Sustainable International Development (SID) were recently designated as one of only eight such programs in the United States approved to host World Bank Scholars. Student participation in the International Friends Program, which pairs SID students with host families from the Brandeis Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, has increased more than 55 percent in the last year.

Professor A.K. Nandakumar participated in a mid-term evaluation of the Gates Foundation’s HIV/AIDS project in India. Based on his expertise, the Heller School is very likely to receive a contract from the Gates Foundation to assist with two major areas of work: Health Resource Tracking and Islamic States Initiative.

Professor Donald Shepard was profiled in a recent Boston Globe article that chronicled his extensive research on the cost of treating dengue fever in Southeast Asia and Latin America. Shepard and his colleagues at the Schneider Institutes held workshops for dengue fever researchers both at Brandeis and at Mahidol University in Thailand.

The results of Professor Andrew Hahn’s international study, in conjunction with the World Bank, of youth programs in thirteen countries were presented at the Carnegie Endowment.

Senior Scientist Joan Kaufman edited the first English language book on China’s AIDS epidemic. Chinese officials have begun adopting some of the book’s recommendations, particularly in the areas of AIDS testing and treatment.

Professor Laurence Simon, associate dean for academic planning and director of the Programs in Sustainable International Development, is spending his sabbatical this semester as senior advisor on global poverty at the Google Foundation, the non-profit arm of Google. He is working on creating strategies for more equitable economic growth and improving access and quality of essential services for the poor.
The Heller School’s Ph.D. program was selected by the Open Society Institute and the Soros Foundation Network to train future Palestinian academics and faculty members from the West Bank and Gaza through the Palestinian Faculty Development Program (PFDP). Three current Ph.D. students are being supported under this program. The Heller School was selected to host the PFDP 2007 Fellows’ Conference.

**HELDER IN THE UNITED STATES**

*U.S. News & World Report* ranked the Heller School third in the country among graduate schools of social policy.

I was honored to be named among *Modern Healthcare’s* 100 most powerful people in health care as well as one of thirty “movers and shakers” in the industry over the last 30 years.

**Professor Michael Doonan, PhD ’02,** and I were much in demand following Massachusetts’ passage of universal health coverage legislation. We gave talks around the country and wrote an op-ed piece for the New England Journal of Medicine, and I had the opportunity to testify before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee on the same issue and publish an article in the November/December 2006 issue of the American Interest.

**Thomas Shapiro,** the Pokross Professor of Law and Social Policy, and his team at the Institute on Assets and Social Policy (IASP) have partnered with the Florida Minority Community Reinvestment Coalition to develop a new initiative to help impoverished minority families move toward middle-class security.

**The Council on Health Care Economics and Policy,** a Heller-based effort, held its 13th annual Princeton Conference, “Reinventing Health Care for the 21st Century.” The Council and its programs bring together top scholars, as well as public and private officials, to examine how the health care system changed over the past 30 years and to focus on how to improve quality and efficiency in health care delivery. This year’s Princeton Conference on health care workforce issues will provide new data and discuss whether we have the right number and mix of specialty physicians, how best to deal with the current nursing shortage, and how well we are prepared to meet future health care needs.

**The Health Industry Forum,** a program based at the Heller School, convenes small leadership conferences of leading policymakers from government, industry, and academia to focus on practical and innovative strategies for improving the quality and effectiveness of health care in the United States. Recently, it co-sponsored an important roundtable policy discussion on how technology assessment in the U.S. can be redesigned to sustain innovation and improve value. The Forum’s work was cited in a recent British Medical Journal article.

The Heller School will once again host the **Leadership Program in Health Policy and Management** in June 2007. Developed in conjunction with and supported by the American College of Surgeons and the Thoracic Surgeons Foundation for Research and Education, this intensive one-week program trains senior clinical leaders in health policy and management.

**Professors Christine Bishop** and **Walter Leutz,** with colleagues from Boston College, aim to help nursing homes make the transition to providing more individualized, or “person-centered,” care. Their work will assess a partnership developed by Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union in New York City with senior management at forty nursing homes.
HELLER IN MASSACHUSETTS

The Massachusetts Health Policy Forum (MHPF), a Heller-based program, features forums that bring policy makers together to discuss cutting-edge health issues. Recent topics have included overweight and obesity, and the pandemic threat and state preparedness. MHPF events are often covered by local media, including the New England Cable News Network, WBUR, Fox News, and the Boston Herald. An upcoming forum will feature the Massachusetts governor, speaker of the House, and Senate president and their analyses of the first year of health care reform in Massachusetts. MHPF also runs student forums for graduate students from seven colleges and universities around Boston. Students meet senior legislative, executive, and administrative officials for firsthand insight into how state health policy is made and implemented.

The Home for Little Wanderers, one of the nation’s oldest child welfare organizations, led by Heller alumna Joan Wallace-Benjamin, PhD ’80, has partnered with Susan Curnan, associate professor and director of the Center for Youth and Communities, to develop a program that brings Heller faculty, staff, and students to the Home and managers from the Home to Heller classrooms.

Continuing the Heller tradition of public engagement, the Boston Globe published an op-ed with my health care advice for incoming Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, and ran an op-ed cowritten by Sandra Venner, senior program associate at the Institute on Assets and Social Policy, urging the governor to adopt programs that help vulnerable people build assets and create economic security. The Boston Herald published an op-ed by Curnan about the positives and negatives of Boston Mayor Thomas Menino’s gun buyback program.

HOME AT HELLER

Our two signature annual events, the Annual Distinguished Lecture in Human Services Management and the Zinner Distinguished Lecture Series, were both held in the spring. Our management lecture featured alumna Freada Klein, PhD ’84, speaking about progressive human resources to a full house. Our Zinner event, “Women’s Civic and Political Leadership Yesterday and Today, Featuring Timeless Strategies from Eleanor Roosevelt,” was led by author Robin Gerber and included a panel discussion with Shannon O’Brien, the former Massachusetts state treasurer, and Wallace-Benjamin.

Information on upcoming events can always be found on the newly redesigned Heller website (http://heller.brandeis.edu/), which was launched this academic year. The site also features extensive information about the school’s academic programs, research, an alumni/student jobs data base, and services for students, including a password-protected web portal for Heller community members. The site is updated regularly with news of faculty members, alumni, and research, as well as links to news stories that quote our faculty.

In closing, I wanted to say that I have thoroughly enjoyed my re-appointment as dean of the Heller School. It has given me the opportunity to lead this fine graduate school at a different time in its development.

Warm wishes,

Stuart H. Altman
Dean