University celebrates namesake
Brandeis earns praise on his 150th birthday

By Dennis Nealon and Carrie Simmons

His ears must have been burning. Wherever Louis D. Brandeis marked his 150th birthday Nov. 13, he had to have known he was the talk of this campus, from one end to the other, as the university paused to celebrate its namesake’s extraordinary life and enduring legacy.

And from a special symposium to a packed birthday celebration in the Shapiro Campus Center atrium, the sentiment was the same: Come back, Louis, the country could really use you right about now.

Standing beside President Jehuda Reinharz, PhD’72, Margaret H. Marshall, chief justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, invoked the spirit of the famed jurist for hundreds gathered.

As sunlight streamed through three stories of glass, the Irving Schneider and Family Building was officially dedicated during a crowded Nov. 3 ribbon-cutting ceremony.

“This is a historic occasion in the history of Heller,” said Tom Glynn, PhD’77, chairman of The Heller School for Social Policy and Management’s Board of Overseers, as he stood in the Rhonda S. and Michael J. Zinner Forum, a public atrium space.

Glynn said the new building, which was designed by Kyu Sung Woo and Steve Lacker, captures Heller’s pioneering spirit and sense of community, particularly in the Zinner Forum, which serves as a kind of “town square” for the school.

The facility, connected to the Heller-Brown Building, doubles the school’s existing space with the addition of more than 34,000 square feet that includes classrooms, lecture areas, lounges, a café and study space.

President Jehuda Reinharz, PhD’72, began his remarks by asking the audience of students, faculty, staff and
Building today, for tomorrow

Schneider facility puts environment first

By Carrie Simmons

With recycled steel, bamboo flooring and green label carpets, the newest architectural addition to the Brandeis landscape showcases the university’s commitment to sustainable design – now an integral part of capital projects on campus.

Architects and planners involved with the Irving Schneider and Family Building project worked to incorporate technologies that increase energy efficiency and reduce operating costs, provide a healthy environment for those who learn and work within the building, and contribute to conserving environmental resources both locally and globally.

“The university’s commitment to environmentally responsible design is fundamentally linked to its larger commitment to social action and being global citizens in a world of shared and limited resources,” said Dan Feldman, vice president for capital projects. “With the Schneider Building, we accomplished a lot of good things within the constraints of the budget.”

The new building is physically oriented to take advantage of southern exposure and deciduous trees, shading the summer sun and capturing the winter sun. Large windows and skylights that provide fresh air and natural light complement high-efficiency mechanical systems to further reduce energy consumption. Materials were selected for their durability, renewability and low toxicity, including bamboo flooring, green label carpet, paints with low levels of volatile organic compounds and non-fired stone tile.

In an effort to minimize the impact to the surrounding environment, the new building has a smaller footprint than the former asphalt parking lot and the new landscape includes more than 20 native plant species and 50 new canopy trees. Stormwater runoff is captured in basins that gradually release it back into the ground, while a new bioswale—or buffer zone—between the library access road and the wetlands removes silt and pollution from the road runoff before it flows into the wetlands.

Brandeis students have long taken the initiative in promoting campus sustainability programs, Feldman said, and the Heller community was instrumental in the sustainable design of its new building. HellerSAFE (Sustainability, Awareness and Valuing the Environment)—a group of researchers, administrative staff, graduate students and faculty—played an active role in the planning process.

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“...[There is a cultural change that goes along with these design changes],” said Feldman. “In 10 years, we hope there won’t be a question about sustainable design. It will just be how it is.”

Gleaming Schneider building makes history for Heller

Schneider

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friends, many of whom peered down from three levels of balconies facing the forum, “What do you think of this building?” The audience responded with applause.

Calling Heller “one of the jewels in the crown of Brandeis,” Reinhartz went on to laud the worldwide impact of the school’s 1,800 graduates.

“Without Irving Schneider, we wouldn’t be standing here,” Reinhartz said. Schneider, a longtime philanthropist, Brandeis benefactor and former trustee, donated $15 million for the building that bears his name.

“My father has his name on very few institutions and buildings in the world,” said Schneider’s daughter, Lynn, before she and other family members, representing three generations of the Schneider family, cut the ribbon. “But he did choose to put his name on this building.”

The Zinner Forum, made possible by a $3.5 million gift from the Zinner family, is designed for lectures, events and faculty-student socializing.

Other donors who were recognized for their important contributions to the construction of the building included Heller overseers Susan Rothenberg and her husband, Danny; Brandeis trustee Jack Connors; Heller overseer Moses Feldman ’62; Heller professor Larry Ballis and his late wife, Susan, a former Brandeis trustee; Heller overseer Paul Egerman and his wife, Joanne; Heller Dean Stuart Altman, the Sol C. Chaikin Professor of National Health Policy; Stan Wallack, the executive director of the Schneider Institutes for Health Policy, and his wife, Anya; overseer Robert and Sara Danziger; longtime Brandeis supporters Sy and Gladys Ziv; and overseer emeritus Muriel Pokross, whose husband, David, served as chair of the overseers.