

Yeshiva University / *Office of the President*



To The Yeshiva University Family

At last night's meeting of the Board of Trustees I asked the Chairman of the Board to appoint a search committee for my successor as President of Yeshiva University and the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary so that I am able to step down in August 2002, or as soon thereafter as a successor can take office. A version of my remarks to the Trustees appears below. I express to all of you—vice presidents, deans, faculty, alumni, staff, students, supporters, and friends—my deep gratitude and enduring appreciation for the contributions and commitment of all who have been instrumental in positioning YU today at the pinnacle of its history.

Announcement by the President of the University

Yeshiva University Board of Trustees Meeting

March 13, 2001

After a great deal of reflection and conversations with my family, close friends, colleagues, and supporters, I have decided that the 2001-2002 academic year will be my final year as President of Yeshiva University. I am announcing my intention so far in advance so that the Board may put into action an appropriate succession plan, with sufficient time to identify appropriate candidates for the dual presidency of YU and RIETS (Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary). While I hope the search process can be completed quickly—with my successor in place by August 2002—I am prepared, if asked by the Board, to remain until a successor can take office, to assure a seamless transition.

Yeshiva University and the YU Family have been my home for 56 years—31 of them as a student and faculty member, and for a quarter of a century as President. Commitment and dedication to the mission and values of academic excellence and to the study and flourishing of the Jewish tradition are the distinguishing qualities of this institution. We are much more than a major university; we are an academic community with a heart and a world-class ethical foundation. There is much to be thankful for and to celebrate as we contemplate the position of YU today. We have advanced significantly on all fronts in the past 25 years and we are a vibrant community that has achieved considerable success, by any measure, in many areas. We are poised for further advancement in the coming years.

- We are fiscally healthy, with an endowment that has grown from \$25 million in 1976 to more than \$875 million. We operate on a budget of \$400 million, although not as yet fully balanced.
- We have emphasized elevating academic excellence through scholarships, honors programs, and faculty recruitment. The reputations and enrollments of our undergraduate and graduate schools and colleges continue to rise. We now have more than 2,724 undergraduate, 3,000 professional and graduate, and 590 post-graduate students.
- We are ranked in the top tier of major universities in national surveys such as *US News & World Report*, and continue to raise YU's profile locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Our affiliated Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS) has a record number of *semikhah* (rabbinical ordination) students—338—and we are the leading proponent of modern Orthodoxy and *Torah Umadda* in the nation and, indeed, the world. RIETS has founded three new Kollelim (post-graduate Talmudic institutes), and established a flourishing Torah Umadda Project, the Orthodox Caucus, the Orthodox Forum (a prestigious think tank), and the Association of Modern Orthodox Day Schools.
- We are now embarking upon a major capital fundraising campaign of \$400 million. Through the generosity of our loyal supporters, we have already achieved 50 percent of our goal.
- We have attained historic high levels in National Institutes for Health research funding (\$113 million) to our Albert Einstein College of Medicine, which in the most recent NIH ranking was listed as 21st in the nation, 2nd in New York state, and 1st in funding for genetics research in New York state.
- Our physical facilities and infrastructure on all campuses have been transformed over the past 25 years, with new facilities and major renovations at the Midtown Campus, the Main Campus, the Jack and Pearl Resnick Campus, and the Brookdale Center. We will continue expansion and enhancements to accommodate new programs, new centers (such as the Price Center for Genetic and Translational Medicine), and growing numbers of students and faculty.
- We have achieved the founding of important new schools and colleges—Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Sy Syms School of Business, Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration, the Irving I. Stone Beit Midrash Program—and the substantial, quality growth of others.

- We have developed and expanded our unique S. Daniel Abraham Israel Program, so that we now have more than 600 students studying in Israel annually.

I have no hesitation in asserting that Yeshiva University is clearly on the ascendency. A university is and should be on the move, a work-in-progress, never a finished project. The challenges of the 21st century are upon us—the digital age, web-based distance learning, growth of our undergraduate schools, refinement of our curricula, recruitment of the highest quality professorate, expansion of our campuses, and continued systematic attention to academic quality. I believe that the time is right to identify a President who can lead Yeshiva University into this century toward even higher goals and greater achievements.

The transfer of my Office to another individual is a major challenge for the University. I intend to remain fully engaged in the daily life of this university until that goal is accomplished, so that our positive forward momentum remains vigorous. Under the leadership of Chairman of the Board Robert M. Beren, a Search Committee structure undoubtedly will soon be formed by our Trustees and the succession and search process commenced. It will, no doubt, be a national if not international search.

I am grateful to the Board of Trustees for the confidence placed in me by inviting me to stay on as Chancellor of the University after my presidency, in which role I can continue to contribute to the welfare of an institution which has educated me as a scholarship student, molded my *Weltanschauung*, and chosen me as its President.

As we continue to work together, I thank all of you for your immeasurable support over the years, and assure you that, over the coming period, I will put my full energies into aggressively advancing our institutional strategy.

I came to this institution as a college freshman, and found that it was far more than an institution, far more than a university, far more than a yeshiva. It was a *home*—intellectually, spiritually, academically, and psychologically. As I contemplate moving on from the presidency, I am even more enthusiastic about YU now than I was as an 18-year-old discovering new worlds opening before me.



Norman Lamm