

## Presidents of the University

The presidents of Lehigh University are described and their achievements cited in the following paragraphs. The years in parentheses are those served in the presidency.

**Henry Coppee** (1866-1875). Coppee served as a railroad engineer in Georgia, a captain in the Army during the Mexican War, and taught at West Point and at the University of Pennsylvania before becoming Lehigh's first president in 1866.

Much building was done on the new university campus. A Moravian church on Packer Avenue was remodeled into Christmas Hall; a house for the president was erected on campus; and Packer Hall, the university center, was built.

Coppee lectured in history, logic, rhetoric, political economy, and Shakespeare.

**John McDowell Leavitt** (1875-1880). Leavitt was an Episcopal clergyman who graduated from Jefferson College and taught at Kenyon College and Ohio University. During his incumbency, the university was divided into two schools: General Literature and Technology. As of 1876, a student could receive two engineering degrees by taking a longer course, and beginning in 1877 the master of arts, doctor of philosophy, and doctor of science degrees were established.

Linderman Library rotunda was completed in 1877. Asa Packer died in May 1879, and the first Founder's Day was held in his honor the following October.

**Robert Alexander Lamberton** (1880-1893). Lamberton, a graduate of Dickinson College, practiced law in Harrisburg, Pa., and was a university trustee when asked to become president. During his administration, students and the community witnessed the first Mustard and Cheese dramatic presentation.

A gymnasium (now Coppee Hall) was erected, and Chandler Chemistry Laboratory was built, now known as Chandler-Ullmann Hall. Lehigh was also building its reputation for academic excellence; the mechanical engineering department was established in 1881 and the Lehigh chapter of Phi Beta Kappa was founded in 1887.

**Thomas Messinger Drown** (1895-1904). Drown studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and went abroad to study chemistry. Thereafter he was professor of chemistry at Lafayette College. In 1895 he assumed the presidency of Lehigh and strove to further the university's development as a technical school.

His first years were difficult ones because the Panic of 1893 decimated the university's stock holdings in the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Nevertheless, Lehigh managed to grow in enrollment, academics, and in physical plant. Williams Hall was completed. The curriculum leading to a degree in arts and engineering was established, as was the department of zoology and biology. New curricula were adopted in metallurgical engineering, geology, and physics.

Drown died in office in 1904. Professor William H. Chandler became acting president.

**Henry Sturgis Drinker** (1905-1920). Drinker, an 1871 Lehigh graduate, was the first university alumnus to become president. In 1907, the alumni endowment fund began, the Lehigh Alumni Bulletin was first published in 1913, and the Alumni Association was incorporated in 1917.

Drinker, besides being a lawyer, was a mechanical engineer and had been largely instrumental in solving the problems of constructing the two-mile-long Musconetcong Tunnel, an engineering feat that made possible a railroad line between Easton, Pa., and New York City. He started a tradition of businesslike management of university affairs.

During Drinker's years, more buildings were completed: the original section of Fritz Engineering Laboratory, Drown Hall, Coxie Mining Laboratory, Taylor Hall, Taylor Gymnasium and Field House, Taylor Stadium, and Lamberton Hall. Drinker's interest in horticulture led to the planting of many rare trees and plants on campus.

A teacher's course and business administration course were begun in 1909 and in 1918 the university was divided into three colleges: liberal arts, business administration, and engineering — the roots of the colleges of today. Army ROTC was established in 1919.

Drinker's daughter, Catherine Drinker Bowen, went on to become a historical writer of note. Her experiences as the daughter of a Lehigh president and occupant of the President's House are recorded in *Family Portrait* (Atlantic Little-Brown).

Drinker resigned in 1920 and Natt M. Emery, vice president, served as chief executive officer until 1922.

**Charles Russ Richards** (1922-1935). Richards took office in 1922. During his presidency, the first graduate degrees were awarded to women. Lehigh faced a shortage of students from 1929 to 1936 as a result of the Depression, but the newly established Office of Admission, as well as university scholarships, fellowships, and deferred tuition payments, helped to ease the shortage.

Changing concepts of education were evident in several newly organized academic offerings: philosophy, music, psychology, journalism, history, and fine arts. The majors system was instituted, as were the senior comprehensive examinations in the Arts College. The placement bureau, a public relations office, and a student health service were organized.

The Alumni Memorial Building, a memorial to the Lehigh alumni who served in World War I, was opened in 1925 and Packard Laboratory was completed in 1929. In the same decade, a major addition to Linderman Library also was completed.

**Clement C. Williams** (1935-1944). Williams, a civil engineer, came to Lehigh from the University of Iowa, where he served as dean of the engineering college. He was president of Lehigh during an era of unprecedented alumni support. Undergraduate enrollment rose to an all-time high, passing 2,000 in 1938.

Richards and Drinker residential houses, and the Ullmann wing adjoining the Chandler Chemistry Laboratory, were built. Grace Hall, the first arena-type facility of any size on campus, was completed in 1940, the gift of Eugene G. Grace, an 1899 graduate, who headed the board of trustees. A graduate school implemented the programs in the three colleges. Williams retired in 1944, and the university was without a president for approximately two years.

**Martin Dewey Whitaker** (1946-1960). Dr. Whitaker, who had been director of the Atomic Energy Commission Laboratory at Oak Ridge, Tenn., and had worked on the Manhattan Project that developed the atomic bomb, faced the responsibility of helping the university community readjust to peacetime conditions after World War II.

During Whitaker's time as president, Lehigh's assets nearly tripled; the endowment more than doubled to \$18 million. Many buildings were renovated, and the Dravo House and McClintic-Marshall House residence halls were built. The faculty increased in number by 75 percent and the first endowed distinguished professorships were established.

The Centennial development program was begun in 1959. It raised more than \$22 million for faculty salaries and construction that later included Whitaker Laboratory.

An extensive renovation and enlargement project associated with Packer Hall was undertaken in 1957, and, upon completion in 1958, the building became the university center.

Whitaker died in office.

**Harvey A. Neville** (1961-1964). Harvey A. Neville was the only faculty member ever elected president. His association with the university began in 1927 as an assistant professor of chemistry. During his relatively short three-year term as president, the first phase of the Saucon Valley athletic complex was completed, and Sayre Field was opened atop South Mountain. The Center for Information and Computing Science was established.

Neville, a strong supporter of research who fostered its growth on campus, died in 1983.

**Deming Lewis** (1964-1982). Willard Deming Lewis became Lehigh's 10th president after a distinguished career as a space engineer and research administrator.

Dr. Lewis earned three degrees at Harvard and two from England's Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar in advanced mathematics. In 1941, he joined Bell Telephone Laboratories, and in 1962 he became general manager of systems development with Bellcomm Inc., which engineered systems for the Apollo project that placed the first man on the moon.

Lewis received 33 U.S. patents on such devices as microwave antennas and filter and digital error detection systems. He helped write the equations describing a stylus sliding through a warped groove.

During Lewis' tenure as Lehigh president, women were admitted as undergraduate students in 1971. New majors were begun in natural science, biology, social relations, geological sciences, environmental science and resource management, religion studies, computer engineering, computing and information science, applied mathematics, management science, American studies, and other fields. Six research centers and seven institutes were established.

Capital campaigns brought in more than \$130 million, and construction was completed on Maginnes Hall, Whitaker Lab, Mart Science and Engineering Library, Sinclair Lab, the Seeley G. Mudd Building, Neville Hall, Rathbone Hall dining room, 13 fraternity houses, the Centennial I and Centennial II residential complexes, the Brodhead House residence hall, the Trembley Park student apartments, the Saucon Village apartments, the Philip Rauch Field House, and the Stabler Athletic and Convocation Center. The restoration of Packer Memorial Church was completed, and Packard Lab was renovated.

The original physics laboratory is now named in Lewis' honor, as is the indoor tennis center.

**Peter Likins** (1982-1997). Dr. Peter Likins, who earned a B.S. and Ph.D. from Stanford, and an M.S. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, became Lehigh's 11th president in 1982. He sought balanced excellence in undergraduate programs while pursuing focused objectives in graduate study and research.

Under Likins, Lehigh nearly doubled in size with the purchase in 1986 of 742 acres of land and a research complex from Bethlehem Steel Corp. The new Mountaintop Campus links the Asa Packer and Goodman campuses.

Lehigh also added many new buildings and facilities. Perhaps most notable was the \$33 million Zoellner Arts Center, which provided a new home to Lehigh's departments of music and theatre and to the University Art Galleries, and made Lehigh a center for the fine arts. The arts center and the new Rauch Business Center, home of the College of Business, were built on the site of Taylor Stadium, which was replaced by Goodman Stadium on Lehigh's athletic campus.

Also during Likins' term, Lehigh built a \$20 million, state-of-the-art telecommunications system, the E.W. Fairchild-Martindale Library and Computing Center, and the Harold S. Mohler Lab, which honors the former chairman of the board of trustees. Also dedicated was the Sherman Fairchild Center for the Physical Sciences, which includes the renovated Physics Building (renamed Lewis Lab), and the adjoining Sherman Fairchild Lab.

Lehigh became home to the Northeast Tier Ben Franklin Advanced Technology Center, which has helped hundreds of new high-technology businesses get started. And the university led the way in establishing the Colonial League, now the Patriot League, in football. The league is committed to the Lehigh tradition of scholar-athletes.

Likins' term also saw the establishment of the Lehigh Valley Center for Jewish Studies at Lehigh, the Center for Advanced Technology for Large Structural Systems, largest of its kind in North America, and centers in integrated circuits, management studies, chemical process modeling and control, and international studies.

Likins, an expert in spacecraft dynamics and control who has written textbooks in engineering mechanics, was one of 13 science advisers to President George H.W. Bush. He came to Lehigh after serving as

dean of engineering and provost at Columbia, and left to become president of the University of Arizona.

**William C. Hittinger** (1997-1998). A former chair of the university's board of trustees, Hittinger became interim president after the departure of Peter Likins. A member of the National Academy of Engineering, Hittinger served for 22 years on the board of trustees. He graduated from Lehigh in 1944 with a B.S. in metallurgical engineering.

Over a 40-year career in the electronics industry, Hittinger worked for Western Electric Co., National Union Radio Corp., Bell Telephone Laboratories, Bellcomm Inc., General Instrument Corp., and RCA Corp. At Bellcomm, he oversaw systems engineering for NASA's manned spaceflight program, and at RCA, where he became executive vice president, he was responsible for corporate technology, patents, licensing, international business and marketing development, and corporate technology planning.

Hittinger was a member of President Reagan's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee from 1982-86. He was also a member of the U.S.-Brazil Presidential Committee on Science and Technology and a member of the board of directors for eight companies.

Hittinger served as national president of the Lehigh Alumni Association in 1971-72 and received the prestigious L-in-Life Award in 1979. An ROTC student at Lehigh, he served in the U.S. Army in 1943-46 during World War II, rising to the rank of captain.

As president, Hittinger realigned the Iacocca Institute into the College of Business, oversaw the construction of the new Sayre Park Village residential complex, and helped Lehigh move forward during a time of presidential transition.

**Gregory C. Farrington** (1998-2006). Dr. Farrington was appointed Lehigh's 12th president in May 1998 and served the university for eight years before stepping down in June 2006. Proclaiming on many occasions that "the only thing good enough for Lehigh is the best," Farrington promoted academic excellence, improved facilities, and fostered collaborative relationships between Lehigh and the surrounding community.

Farrington earned his B.S. from Clarkson University and his A.M. and Ph.D. from Harvard, all in chemistry and specializing in solid state electrochemistry. Before joining the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Materials Science and Engineering in 1979, he was a research chemist for General Electric Company's Corporate Research and Development Center. At Penn, he served as dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science. He holds or shares more than two dozen patents.

While at Lehigh, Farrington established the university's bold and creative Lehigh 2020 Initiative. Launched in October 2000, the \$75-million academic venture capital fund focused investment on attracting and retaining the best faculty and students, creating distinctive academic programs, funding critical research fields, and stimulating cross-curricular collaboration. New programs created through the 2020 program include those in bioscience, bioengineering, applied life science, computer science and engineering, information systems and engineering, and bioeconomics.

Along with the reinvigoration of academics and the promotion of interdisciplinary learning, Farrington also literally changed the face of Lehigh's historic campus. More than 20 major campus enhancement projects were completed during his term, among them the construction of Campus Square (since renamed Farrington Square), a new Alumni Memorial Building arrival court and parking garage, and a pedestrian walkway through the heart of the campus green, transforming it into a central gathering place. In addition, Coppee Hall, Lamberton Hall, Maginnes Hall, Wilbur Powerhouse, Grace Hall, the A. Haigh Cundey Varsity House, and Linderman Library were renovated.

Under Farrington's leadership, Shine Forever: The Campaign for Lehigh generated more than half of its \$500 million goal to endow faculty chairs, scholarships, academic programs, and facilities.

He also advocated collaborations with the city of Bethlehem, state and federal government, industry, and other partners to strengthen the

university and spur regional economic development. His commitment to the Lehigh Valley was evident in his participation on various boards. He actively participated on the board of trustees of St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network, the National Museum of Industrial History, and Lehigh Valley Partnership.

**Alice P. Gast** (2006-2014) became the 13th president of Lehigh University on August 1, 2006.

Before coming to Lehigh, Dr. Gast served as the vice president for research and associate provost at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Prior to joining MIT in 2001, she spent 16 years as a professor of chemical engineering at Stanford University and at the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory. She is the co-author of *Physical Chemistry of Surfaces*, a classic textbook on colloid and surface phenomena, and has presented named lectures at several of the nation's leading research institutions.

Gast received her B.S. in chemical engineering from the University of Southern California. After earning her Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Princeton University, she spent a postdoctoral year on a NATO fellowship at the Ecole Supérieure de Physique et de Chimie Industrielles in Paris.

Gast has served on numerous advisory committees and boards, including the Board of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Research Council Committee for Science, Technology, and the Law. In 2010, she was named to the post of science envoy by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and the U.S. State Department.

During Gast's tenure as president, Lehigh expanded its footprint with the addition of the 750-acre Stabler Campus, increased its international presence, and expanded innovative approaches to student-directed learning with the launch of the Mountaintop Campus Experience.

**Kevin L. Clayton** (2014-2015) became interim president after the departure of Alice Gast. He retired from the global investment management firm Oaktree Capital Management, L.P., where he had a distinguished 19-year career. He joined Oaktree in 1995 and founded their Marketing and Client Relations Department; he retired as principal and director of the firm.

Clayton earned his B.A. in government from Lehigh in 1984 and his M.B.A. from St. Joseph's University in 1988. As a Lehigh student, he served as a four-year class president; as a member of the Newman Association and Alpha Tau Omega; and was elected to Omicron Delta Kappa, the national leadership honor society. He continued his service to Lehigh as a member of the Board of Trustees for 22 years, including 5 years as chair.

Clayton and his family have long-standing ties to Lehigh. His late father, William Clayton '51, was a Lehigh trustee for more than 20 years and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Board.

In honor of his parents, Clayton and his wife, Lisa, established the William L. and Carol L. Clayton Endowed Scholarship Fund in 2003. In 2008 they established the Lisa A. and Kevin L. Clayton '84 Endowed Scholarship Fund to support students enrolled in Lehigh's South Mountain College. Their contributions also include supporting the Annual Fund, the Athletics Partnership Program, and the Dean's Strategic Initiative. The Claytons' son, Patrick '13, became a member of the third generation of Claytons to earn a Lehigh degree.

During Clayton's term as interim president, he helped many of the university's ongoing projects develop, including Data X, Creative Spaces, and the Mountaintop initiative.

**John D. Simon** (2015-2021) was installed as Lehigh's 14th president during the annual Founder's Day ceremony on October 2, 2015. Before coming to Lehigh, Dr. Simon was executive vice president and provost at the University of Virginia. Previous to that, he was vice provost of academic affairs at Duke University.

During his tenure at UVA, Dr. Simon spearheaded a number of global initiatives, including the establishment of a new major in global studies and the opening of a physical presence for the university in Asia. He played a leading role in the launch of the university's cutting-edge

Data Science Institute as well as its Advanced Research Institute, and in creating the university's Endowment for the Arts.

At Duke, Dr. Simon guided the university's strategic planning process and drove initiatives aimed at connecting the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. He was chairman of Duke's department of chemistry from 1999-2004, and also held appointments in the Duke University Medical Center in both biochemistry and ophthalmology.

Dr. Simon received his B.A. in chemistry from Williams College in 1979 and his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1983. After a postdoctoral fellowship at UCLA, he joined the department of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of California-San Diego in 1985, then moved to Duke as the George B. Geller Professor of Chemistry in 1998. He has been the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards for his scientific work, including the Presidential Young Investigator Award, Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship, Camille and Henry Dreyfus Teacher Scholar Award, and the Fresenius Award. He is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Physical Society.

Under Dr. Simon's leadership, Lehigh established a new College of Health; constructed new residence halls (SouthSide Commons and the Singleton, Hitch, and Maida Houses); elevated the university's commitment to increasing diversity among students, faculty, and staff; launched GO: The Campaign for Lehigh, helping to meet the \$1-billion-plus campaign goal; and strengthened the relationship between the university and the City of Bethlehem.

**Joseph J. Helble** (2021-present) became Lehigh University's 15th president on August 16, 2021 — the second university alumnus to become president. He was installed during the annual Founder's Day ceremony on October 15, 2021. Helble came to Lehigh from Dartmouth College, where he served as provost from 2018-2021. Prior to becoming provost, he served for 13 years as dean of Dartmouth's Thayer School of Engineering.

Before joining Dartmouth, Helble worked as a research scientist at Physical Sciences Inc.; as a faculty member and later chair of chemical engineering at the University of Connecticut; and as the 2004-2005 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Roger Revelle Fellow, in which capacity he spent a year addressing technology and environmental policy initiatives in the office of U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman.

Helble has served on numerous EPA Science Advisory Board panels, and was chair of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) Engineering Deans' Public Policy Committee. He is a recipient of an NSF CAREER Award, an outstanding young faculty award from the University of Connecticut School of Engineering, and the AAAS Barnard Award. In 2017 he was named a fellow of AAAS.

Helble is the author of over 100 publications on air pollution, aerosols, and nanoscale ceramics, and he holds three U.S. patents. In 2014 he and three Dartmouth colleagues received the National Academy of Engineering Bernard M. Gordon Prize. He holds a BS in chemical engineering from Lehigh and a PhD in chemical engineering from MIT.