Growing up here, I remember every 10-year anniversary celebration since Lynn’s 20th. This academic year, we arrived at a big one: 50.

So, we started big—by hosting the third and final presidential debate Oct. 22, 2012, in our Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center. At Lynn, we’ve always believed in promoting meaningful dialogue on important issues, and for our 50th, we held the ultimate dialogue.

Many more highlights followed, among them:

• On Jan. 15, we announced a new tablet-based learning initiative. Starting in fall 2013, every freshman will receive an iPad mini loaded with core curriculum courses, digital versions of the core curriculum readers and useful apps. Not only are we putting a transformational learning companion in students’ hands, we’re also saving them up to 50 percent off the cost of their core curriculum textbooks alone over a two-year period.
• On Feb. 6, author and education and creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson delivered our Dively Frontiers in Globalization Lecture.
• On Feb. 13, we broke ground on the Bobby Campbell Soccer Stadium. Named for lead donor Bobby Campbell, this impressive facility will be the new home for our eight-time national championship soccer teams and new men’s lacrosse team.
• On March 21-24, we welcomed 820 alumni and friends for our 50th Anniversary Celebration Weekend. Centerpiece to the weekend was the groundbreaking on March 22 for our magnificent International Business Center. This 32,000-square-foot, LEED design building will be the new home for our College of Business and Management. The project started with a $6 million gift from an anonymous alumni donor, who also matched an additional $3 million raised by the university.
• Our Office of Admission’s personalized campus visit experience twice captured national attention in Inside Higher Ed, in September, and The New York Times, in April.
• In our 48th commencement exercises May 10-11, we conferred degrees to 530 graduates, honoring our mission “to provide the education, support and environment that enable individual students to realize their full potential and to prepare for success in the world.”

After such a momentous year, some might wonder what’s next for Lynn University. The short answer: plenty.

We are now mid-way in our 15-year Lynn 2020 strategic plan. With many of our 52 initiatives accomplished, we’re forging ahead to complete them all. In the last six years alone, we achieved another 50th milestone: $50 million in gifts from individuals who have invested in our people and programs. And parents from all over the world and the United States also are demonstrating their confidence in our institution by sending their sons and daughters here.

At 50, Lynn University has found its full stride, with no signs of slowing down. In fact, we are thinking and moving at a faster pace than ever before.

Still, it’s important to reflect on the people and experiences that have brought us to this historic point. We do just that in this commemorative issue of Lynn Magazine devoted to our presidential debate experience and your “50 Favorite Things About Lynn.”

Here’s to our 50 remarkable years and to you for helping make them so.

Kevin M. Ross
President
1962: The year of Marymount and so much more

Whether you were around in 1962 or not, chances are you’ll recognize the following people/places/happenings of this special year.

- **Discount kings:** Walmart, Target and Kmart open their first stores.
- **Inventions:** Audio cassette, fibertip pen, light-emitting diode (LED)
- **U.S. leaders:** John F. Kennedy is president, and Lyndon Johnson is vice president.
- **Sports champions:** New York Yankees (World Series), Green Bay Packers (NFL), Boston Celtics (NBA)
- **Pop art:** Andy Warhol first exhibits Campbell’s Soup Cans.
- **Dance crazes:** The Twist, the Watusi and the Mashed Potato
- **Brit rock ‘n’ roll:** The Beatles release their first single, “Love Me Do,” and The Rolling Stones make their debut at London’s Marquee Club.
- **American rock ‘n’ roll:** The Beach Boys release their first album *Surfin’ Safari.*
- **007:** The first James Bond movie, *Dr. No,* starring Sean Connery premieres.
- **Purchasing power:** $15,000 for a new house; 22 cents for a loaf of bread; 25 cents for a gallon of gas; $2,500 for a new car; 4 cents for a first-class stamp; 50 cents for a movie ticket
- **Black history:** James Meredith becomes the first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi; Jackie Robinson is the first black elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.
- **Super-heroes:** The Incredible Hulk and Spider-Man comic books appear.

New cars: Pontiac Grand Prix and LeMans, Triumph Spitfire


Movies: To Kill a Mockingbird, Whatever Happened to Baby Jane, The Music Man, That Touch of Mink

Books: Ship of Fools by Katherine Anne Porter, Gambit by Rex Stout, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest by Ken Kesey, Island by Aldous Huxley, Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury


Music artists with first hits: The Four Seasons; Jay and the Americans; Bobby Vinton; Marvin Gaye; Peter, Paul and Mary

Births: Jon Bon Jovi, Jim Carrey, Sheryl Crow, Garth Brookes, Tom Cruise, Rosie O’Donnell, Matthew Broderick, Jodie Foster, Wesley Snipes

Deaths: Marilyn Monroe, e.e. cummings, Eleanor Roosevelt, William Faulkner

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Cover photos by Helena Suba (student/nun, soccer champion, graduates), Gina Fontana (groundbreaking), Mark Abraham (debate stage), Andrea Schwartz (debate ticket-winners), Rj Gaylor (campus), Tracey Ann Jarrett (cake)
Capping our yearlong celebration of Lynn University’s 50th anniversary, we present 50 things—some from you and some from us—that we love about Lynn. Of course, the list could be much longer, but because of space, we’ve limited it to our celebratory number of 50. And while we number them, it’s for purposes of counting, not ranking. Thanks to everyone who wrote in. See if you can spot your favorite aspect of Lynn in the list. If not, visit us online at lynn.edu/magazine and add your favorite in the Comment box.
An alligator, gardenias and beach mischief

When I attended Lynn, it was Marymount College. It was small but the most beautiful campus. Once in a while, when walking from Trinity Hall or New Dorm to the cafeteria, the campus alligator would show himself in the pond near there.

I loved all the gardenia bushes there. The flowers were so big and fragrant. Sometimes I would pick one or two and float them in a bowl in my room. Oh, the fragrance was so lovely.

All the girls knew each other—both sophomores and freshmen. We all got to know several of the day students, some of whom were male. They loved to flirt.

The nuns were all friendly even when being strict. We had a beach party with a bonfire when we were ready to graduate, and we threw one of the Sisters in the ocean. It was not only fun, but also funny. She came out minus her veil. Back then, it was such a novelty to see a nun without her cap.

The TV was in the lounge of the dorm, and that is where everyone gathered and got to know each other. There were no TVs in the dorm rooms. …

Marymount was a great place. I was homesick at first, but it didn’t take long to get acclimated. I didn’t really want to leave. I made some great friends there and am still in contact with a really good friend who doesn’t live too far from me. I still miss the gardenia bushes and skipping class to lie out in the sun before going home. Great times!

—M. Denise Casper Chickey ’68
Erlanger, Ky.
The nuns

At Marymount, I lived in two of the three dorms. We had nuns on each floor. We had to sign in and out every time we went off campus. … The nun on our hall [Sister Regina (Donna) Cribari] was young and beautiful with the voice of an angel and could play the guitar like nobody I had ever heard.”

—Kathleen Campbell Mullen
1968 student
Fairfield Bay, Ark.

Bridge tournaments, boys and monograms

I HAVE TO ADMIT, arriving on the Marymount campus in the fall of 1965, I wondered what I was thinking by coming there! My concerns were alleviated within days, as the girls bonded during a hurricane and friendships sparked that would last a lifetime. Boca was just a sleepy resort town then and FAU a single building with an airstrip and marked concrete on its campus that was fun to drive on for those of us who were fortunate to have a car. We were pretty isolated without transportation, but creativity won over. Something was always going on: 24-hour bridge tournaments in smoke-filled rooms (the smoke held back with wet towels because smoking wasn’t allowed in the rooms), marathon trips to St. Leo College (where the boys were) and shopping in the Pink Plaza for the signature Marymount look—monogrammed everything. Even as I write this, I am thinking, “Wow, those were simple times”—and they were. Yes, we were there for an education, but those memories seem to take second place to the fun days of which I could write on about. I believe that many of my friends were given a wonderful start on a career path at Marymount/Lynn and went on to have meaningful careers, as mothers or in the business community.

—Linda Betten Sidor
1965 student
Kildeer, Ill.
4 Donald E. and Helen L. Ross

Our university probably wouldn’t be here today were it not for Donald E. Ross, who saw the potential of a fiscally moribund Marymount College while visiting in 1971. Then the president of Wilmington College, he came to purchase Marymount’s library books. He met with several of the nuns who led Marymount, among them Kathleen Clunan, today Lynn’s archivist. She recalls, “Just to hear Dr. Ross’ enthusiasm for this place was so encouraging. You felt there was hope.” Thanks to the dedication of him and his wife, Helen L. Ross, who a few years later—in 1978—founded the hugely popular Pine Tree Camps, Marymount not only survived, but flourished, becoming the College of Boca Raton in 1974 and Lynn University in 1991. After serving 35 years as our president, Donald Ross retired in 2006.
CBR memories

I CAME TO THE COLLEGE OF BOCA RATON (CBR) from Baltimore, Md. I had never been away from home, except for summer camp and such. It was a small school of about 500 students. I loved it. There was a visiting alligator in the front pond that everyone affectionately named Wally.

One student came across a lawn statue of an egret. That tall ornament was placed in a novel place every now and then to the great glee of the students! One day it would be on top of Wixted Hall, another next to the lake.

After classes, a big group would head to Lake Ida to do some water-skiing. I learned to ski there—slalom! Some of the locals had a great boat that pulled seven at a time. Some days, we headed over to the Pompano Water Slide. A few students worked there part-time. I keep in touch with two friends from my days at CBR. Great time of life!

—Dana Daisey Remington ’78
Deerfield Beach, Fla.

I ONLY HAVE GOOD MEMORIES from my college years. I really enjoyed my time, academic and social, spent at the College of Boca Raton. The campus, classes and atmosphere were superb.

—Miguel Marin ’90
Coral Springs, Fla.

My roommate and lifelong friend

Jeanne Booth Weil (’75) and I have remained friends since rooming together at Marymount. Jeanne introduced me to my husband in 1979. Today, we live 20 minutes away from each other in Sacramento, Calif.

—Stacie Stewart Mishalanie ’75
Sacramento, Calif.

Weil (left) and Mishalanie at the Aug. 20, 2012, wedding of Mishalanie’s daughter (and Weil’s goddaughter) in Santa Barbara
Our good name

You see the name Lynn quite a bit here—from our entrances, to the Lynn College of International Communication and several of our buildings: the Lynn Residence Center, the E.M. Lynn Residence Center, and The Eugene M. and Christine E. Lynn Library. And don’t forget our students’ favorite café, Christine’s. All are in honor of the family who has so generously supported our university. It all began with the gift of a $100,000 personal check at Christmastime in 1974 from Eugene M. Lynn, an insurance magnate who had moved his company from Kansas City, Mo., to Boca Raton in the 1960s. “It was the beginning of a long and wonderful friendship,” says President Emeritus Donald E. Ross. Eugene Lynn and his wife, Christine, became synonymous with philanthropy in our community and beyond. Eugene Lynn was a member of our board of trustees from 1989 until his untimely death in 1999. On Sept. 17, 1999, Christine E. Lynn was elected chair of our board of trustees and has served in that capacity ever since. More recently, in honor of Lynn’s 50th anniversary, she made a special gift of $500,000. Says President Kevin M. Ross, “We are grateful for Mrs. Lynn, her love for the university, and for her dedication to its mission and vision.”
Late Knight study break

The thing I love most about Lynn is the Late Knight Study Break. This biannual event shows Lynn’s true colors as a close-knit community. Sometimes, it’s the little things in life that help you realize how special something truly is on a larger scale. Seeing professors take time out of their late Sunday evenings, during the hectic time at the end of a semester, to serve a late-night study break meal to their hard-working students is incredible. The smiles on the faces of faculty members reveal their enthusiasm for being there, while students show a deep sense of appreciation. … I believe this single event reinforces the message that no one is a number at Lynn.

—Ryan S. Feigenblatt ’09, ’10
Boca Raton, Fla.
50 Things We Love About Lynn

10 Big LU

Lynn’s lovable mascot has been around since 1992, but he didn’t have a proper name until 2006, when “Big LU” was the winning entry in a naming contest on campus. Since then, Big LU has become a popular “face” on campus, even training like Rocky in a video for the 2012 presidential debate.

11 Our flags

You can’t miss them: the colorful circle of flags waving 132-strong around the lake at our main entrance off Military Trail. They are a powerful symbol of our university’s international character, signifying every nation ever to have been represented by a student at Lynn. “Our large number of international students from diverse backgrounds contributes greatly to the differing types of experiences that can be brought into class discussions,” says Gareth Fowles ’99, ’01, vice president for enrollment management and himself a native of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. “This enriches everyone’s educational experience at Lynn since all students are exposed to other cultures and the unique views held by those from around the world.”
Friends and acting

I met so many of my lifelong friends at the College of Boca Raton. It was where I learned about acting and performing. I also learned in one location (Lynn) about so many countries and the people who live there.

—George Pellegrino ’78
West Chester, Pa.

Pine Tree Camps

IF I HAD TO PICK ONE THING I love about Lynn it would have to be Pine Tree Camps. My family and I moved here in 2000. We began our journey with Pine Tree Camps in the summer of 2001. My children, Nick and Chloe, were 6 years old and 4 years old at the time.

Going to Pine Tree Camps became a yearly ritual for our children. They attended every year, all three sessions, for the past 11 years. My children have had the best experience, have met great friends and enjoyed every minute of every day, rain or shine.

Going to Pine Tree becomes a part of you. The excitement you feel when you go over that first speed bump on the first day of camp is exhilarating. I owe Lynn University so much. Not only did I receive a great education, my children have memories of summers spent having the best time at wonderful Pine Tree Camps. … We are so grateful to Pine Tree. Not only did they provide a fun-filled, action-packed summer, they also taught our children about team spirit, cooperation and how to get along with others.

—Nick ’93, ’04 and June Carbo
Boca Raton, Fla.
Our daughter’s experience

Lynn holds a special place in our hearts because it has been a wonderful experience for our daughter, Sophia, and our family. We are so thankful and grateful to so many people at Lynn, but especially the magnificent Jan McArt. There are so many professors who have influenced Sophia’s direction and worldview.

—Rene Barrett
Hollywood, Fla.

Students are No. 1

WHAT I LOVE about Lynn is how the faculty and staff truly take an interest in the success of their students and are willing to go above and beyond to see us succeed.

—Jennifer M. Rodrigues ’12
Smithfield, R.I.

THE THING THAT I LOVE most about Lynn is how it believes in all of its students and also how Lynn supports them. … I have had my best memories at Lynn University.

—Anika Nims ’04
Alexandria, Va.

Wilbur the giant turtle

Wilbur, the giant turtle, who used to live in the lake by the Ritter building, was our hospitality management mascot for years. We were happy to see that he was moved to the lake by Assaf [when the Ritter lake was filled in and the Ritter building was subsequently demolished].

—Ted Curtis
Assistant Professor of Sports Management
College of Business and Management
No shhhhh’ library policy
—Mariya Koeva ’11
Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

Editor’s note: In 2008, the Lynn Library was reconfigured to provide a place for students to come together, collaborate and study—not just check out books. And that meant taking down the “Quiet Please” signs.

My campus visit

I heard about Lynn through my college counselor and decided to give it a look. I had initially decided upon another college, but my parents fell in love with Lynn University. I, too, fell in love with Lynn when I took a look at the campus. … It is so open and spacious with lakes and green spaces. I also like that it is very sunny here. The professors are very helpful and caring. They go out of their way to help us to do better. They give us the individual attention we need and they make learning fun.

—Chandni Nandwani, Lynn junior
Belize

‘Lynn challenged me to dig deeper … ’

Lynn University has instilled in me a lot of qualities that I never knew I had. It challenged me to dig deeper, to imagine outside of the box, to reach beyond my comfort zone and to strive for my aspirations in life. … This is an amazing school to attend.

—Askin Illait ’12 , ’13
North Lauderdale, Fla.
Small classes, student life and more

There are so many things that I loved about being a student at Lynn University. I loved that the class sizes were small. I loved being able to be involved in so many organizations like KOR (Knights of the Roundtable), Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity and WLYN radio station, to name a few. But what I loved most were the faculty and students that I got to work with and became close friends with.

—Evan Ketover ’99
Windermere, Fla.

Intercultural learning

I LOVE THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE of Lynn University. Having spent 15 years in Tokyo and 25 years in Japan, I appreciate the intercultural understanding and learning that take place in the Lynn community. The course I’ve taught on women mystics covers writers from Germany, Italy, England, Spain and France. Couple that with students from around the world, and we have a very lively classroom with diverse and interesting perspectives.

—Shirley Lutio
Adjunct faculty member
College of Arts and Sciences

Diversity

We are the melting pot of the world here at Lynn University.

—Angela Juliano ’03, ’05
Director of Box Office Operations
Duck crossing

Having to stop and wait for the family of ducks to walk past the crosswalk from one pond to another.

—Danielle Hanoud ’01
Berkley, Mass.

Legendary staff

The ID lady in the cafeteria for years was named Elizabeth Hanusi. No one got past her. She was well respected and took her job seriously. She protected her turf like a military sergeant.

Our business manager, Annette Tomlin, was tough and meant business, but had a soft heart. She was a consummate professional with unfaltering loyalty to Lynn.

—Evelyn Nelson ’03
Executive Director
Student Financial Services

Age was no barrier

Lynn will always be a special place for me since I finished my B.A. there. I felt welcome and accepted by my classmates although the age difference was often 30 years. Someone my age might think they wouldn’t fit in, but that was not my experience at Lynn. Thanks, Lynn, for my special memories and the special relationships I have formed and maintain.

—Debra Jacobs ’11
Royal Palm Beach, Fla.
50 Things We Love About Lynn

Lynn’s Alma Mater

The words and music to our Alma Mater were composed by Lynn’s own Joe Carey, media coordinator in the Lynn College of International Communication in 2001. The Alma Mater was first sung in public at Lynn’s 2002 commencement ceremony and was dedicated to then-President Donald E. Ross and Lynn First Lady Helen L. Ross. Says Carey of his inspiration, “There is a very nice sense of community at Lynn. It’s attractive, multicultural and constantly reinventing itself to become a better and better university. I tried to have the words reflect that spirit in the hope that it could help forge another bond between current students and the thousands of Lynn alumni who have gone before them. Much of the feeling that makes Lynn such a nice place at which to study and work is directly attributable to the Rosses. I felt that dedicating the anthem to them might be a good way to say ‘thank you.’”

What a wonderful Wold

Conservatory of Music dean Jon Robertson has called it “an absolute jewel”: it’s our Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center, opened in spring 2010. It began with lead donor Elaine Johnson Wold’s vision to provide “a superb venue that is warm, inviting and transforms the cultural offerings in our community.” Less than three years after its opening, the Wold Center captured the attention of millions from around the world, which brings us to our next item …
The 2012 Presidential Debate

HISTORY WAS MADE right here at Lynn, when we hosted the third and final presidential debate of 2012 on Oct. 22 between incumbent President Barack Obama and Republican nominee Gov. Mitt Romney. By all accounts, it was worth the hard work: Students gained the education and experience of a lifetime, our university and community shined in the global spotlight, and our campus reaped major technological improvements, enabling us to launch one of higher education’s most extensive tablet-based learning programs. All in all, we showed the world what President Ross is fond of saying: “We may be a small school, but we’re doing big things.”

Lynn student Kevin Studer proudly displays his ticket to the presidential debate inside the Debate Hall. (Inset) Guests at the Red, White & View party take in the debate. The party also included a huge viewing area on the soccer field with three giant screens.
WE LOVE TO SAY IT: WE’RE NO. 1! We garnered our 20th and 21st national titles when the Fighting Knights men’s soccer team crushed Saginaw Valley State on Dec. 2, 2012, and the women’s golf team defeated Nova Southeastern on May 18. Here’s a breakdown of our national crowns:

**WOMEN’S TENNIS**

**MEN’S SOCCER**

**WOMEN’S SOCCER**

**WOMEN’S GOLF**

**BASEBALL**

**MEN’S GOLF**

**MEN’S TENNIS**

1. Victorious! President Kevin Ross salutes 2012 men’s soccer team
2. 1996 women’s tennis national trophy
3. 2009 baseball champs
4. 1998 women’s soccer champions
5. Winning 1996 men’s golf team
6. 2013 women’s golf champs
7. Triumphant 2012 men’s soccer team
8. 2001 women’s tennis aces
9. 2012 men’s soccer national trophy
How can musicians so young sound so amazing? Attend a performance by the Lynn Philharmonia orchestra, made up of students from our Conservatory of Music, and prepare to be awed. Says conservatory dean Jon Robertson, “To call it a student orchestra is almost a misnomer. You close your eyes and you hear these kids play … it’s a professional orchestra—a really good professional orchestra, because their level is so high. Sometimes professionals can get jaded, but our students still love music. They are still experiencing and evoking emotions from every piece they play. … At Lynn, the Conservatory of Music is extremely international, and the wealth of nationalities brings a certain flavor to the music our students perform. … It makes Lynn very special.”
50 Things We Love About Lynn

Hammocks

Our campus is far from sleepy, but for students wanting an occasional power nap between classes, nothing is more relaxing than a break in one of our comfy hammocks.

Remembrance Plaza

Shimmering with light, water and iridescent stone, it inspires us all. The Remembrance Plaza, at the heart of our campus, honors the four students (Stephanie Crispinelli, Britney Gengel, Christine Gianacaci and Courtney Hayes) and two faculty members (Richard Bruno and Patrick Hartwick) who died in the 2010 earthquake in Haiti while performing community service as part of a January Term class titled The Journey of Hope. At the plaza’s dedication on March 16, 2012, student Gwendoline Darguste, a native of Haiti and the first recipient of the Briggs Family Haitian Scholarship, said, “My fellow students and I share a connection because we’re all part of the Lynn University family. This plaza will serve as a daily reminder for us to live lives of service and carry on the legacy.”
Canoe races and Founders Day

THIS YOUNG AND WILDLY POPULAR TRADITION began with the first Founders Day celebration in 2006. Teams of three in wacky costumes vie to finish first, but sometimes just staying dry is a big achievement. Founders Day, our annual celebration of Lynn’s creation, is held on or close to Nov. 1 and also includes nostalgic displays, music and a barbecue dinner. And this brings us to our next item …

Barbecues

Good weather, good friends and good food lend themselves to barbecues, and this is certainly true at Lynn. We dine al fresco with grilled goodies year ’round, namely on Founders Day, Veterans Day and Multicultural Day. Last November we even gathered for a “Red, White & Que” during the week of festivities leading up to the Presidential Debate. The series of outdoor feasts inspired President Ross to quip during his 2012 State of the University address, “I don’t know about you, but if I have any more barbecue, I’m going to be in trouble!”

The original palm tree

You’ll find it just off the lakeside patio behind the caf: a tall, slender coconut palm tree. It’s been here since the beginning and, like our university, it has withstood hurricanes and lean times to grow and mature. It has earned a place of honor in our university seal and, even, our 2012 Presidential Debate logo. Long live our palm!
50 Things We Love About Lynn

Great teaching

Lynn is about great teaching. Says Gregg Cox, vice president for academic affairs, “Faculty members at Lynn University are unlike any university faculty that I have seen. Yes, they are scholars, but most importantly they are teachers and they take that role very seriously. Our faculty are constantly seeking innovative methods to enhance their courses and improve student learning because at Lynn University, teaching is the number one priority for faculty.” Each year, our undergraduate students vote for the Outstanding Teacher of the Year, who is announced at commencement. The 2012 recipient was Stefanie Powers, assistant professor and the program chair of Multimedia Journalism in the Eugene M. and Christine E. Lynn College of International Communication. Powers is also faculty advisor of the student newspaper, iPulse. Describing her teaching style as “interactive,” Powers says, “I’m not one of those professors who just stands up there and lectures the whole time. I like there to be a constant flow of discussion between me and the students. I feel that not only are the students learning in that environment, but I am, as well.”

Graduation

There’s no more joyous occasion on campus than commencement, when hundreds of undergraduate and graduate candidates receive their degrees from Lynn. And it all started with our very first graduate, Edith Alfieri Warter, ’65, the first of 42 graduates to hear her name called at Marymount’s first commencement on May 31, 1965. “I can still see myself on that stage, getting that diploma,” Warter says. “Marymount had a very warm, nurturing environment. I loved the whole experience.”

A new career

THE YEAR WAS 1993, and I was an unemployed airline worker. Lynn accepted me, at the age of 40, into the physical therapist assistant program. Today, I am a licensed physical therapist assistant, earning three times the salary I would be obtaining if I had stayed employed in the airline industry. Because of Lynn University, I am living a very comfortable life.

Jack Levy ’95
Lake Worth, Fla.
Our town: Boca Raton

WE HAVE THE GOOD FORTUNE of being located in one of the world’s most beautiful cities, Boca Raton, Fla. And, if you’re going to live here, you must pronounce the name correctly. It’s “BO-ca rah-TONE,” not “BO-ca rah-TAHN.”


Squirrels

We’re not the only college campus with cute squirrels, but ours may be the friendliest (a Lynn trait that extends even to our wildlife). On rare occasions, these critters can run amok with our power lines, causing electrical outages—making us a bit squirrelly ourselves.
January Term

STUDENTS ARE CRAZY about this 2 1/2-week mini-term between fall and spring semesters because it is devoted to creative learning through special projects, study abroad and internships. With courses like Fashion Photography, Soap Box Derby, The Comedy Behind Comic Strips, and Baseball Dreams and the Miracle League, what’s not to love? And those are just courses on campus. Travel J-Term courses have included a Bali Service Project, the Winter X Games in Aspen and Advocacy for the Galapagos Islands, among others. Says Lynn junior Stephen Proana-Amaya, “I love J-Term because it allows you to experience things in or outside of your major. This year, I got the chance to go to the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador. J-Term is always fun and engaging. It gets you out of the traditional classroom and into the real world to experience things for yourself.”

42 Class gifts

It’s the special touches that truly make a home, and thanks to our graduating classes, our campus home gets better and better. Every year since 2005, members of the graduating class have graced the university with a “thank you” gift: an outdoor clock at Perper Plaza, a barbecue pit by Freiburger Residence Hall, three benches along the main walkway, a contribution to our endowment fund, the lakeside graduation archway, outdoor seating by the residence halls, a bench at Remembrance Plaza, and a plaque commemorating the presidential debate and 50th anniversary in the Wold Performing Arts Center.

New entrances and traffic light

Now that we have the safety, convenience and beauty of two new entrances, it’s hard to imagine our university without them. As the 2012-2013 academic year began, students and faculty returning to campus were greeted with two surprises. At Military Trail, there was a new five-lane entrance complete with traffic light, thanks to a $1 million gift from Robert Sheetz. And off Potomac Road, there was a second west entrance leading to a new perimeter road through campus. This second entrance, plus the relocation of our nature preserve to the western edge of campus, was made possible by a $1 million gift from Benjamin Olewine III. Both projects were part of Lynn’s campus master plan and finished in time for the presidential debate.

Stephen Proana-Amaya in the Galapagos Islands

Class gifts

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The Institute for Achievement and Learning

At Lynn, says sophomore Jordan Caulk, “you can be any kind of learner, and you can thrive here.” He’s just one of thousands of students who have found academic success through our nationally renowned Institute for Achievement and Learning. For more than 20 years, the institute has helped both traditional and non-traditional learners find the resources and academic support services to enhance their academic skills and reach their full potential.

Jordan Caulk

Dively Lecture Series


50 Things We Love About Lynn

The lakes
Lynn’s campus is home to six freshwater lakes, which add to the beauty of our campus and attract our next item …

Can’t name just one
WHAT I LOVE THE MOST ABOUT OUR UNIVERSITY:
• that every day at Lynn is different
• our beautiful campus
• meeting people from all over the world and learning something new every day
• the people I work with
• seeing our students do well and be happy
• listening to the music our students play
• watching our athletes compete for championships
• how innovative and modern we are
• how warm and nice the people at Lynn are
• Multicultural Day and Founders Day
• the opportunities our students have
• the Wold Performing Arts Center, where the final presidential debate was held

—Anna Barr ’05, ’08
Associate Director, Office of Admission
Our alumni

OUR 15,000 ALUMNI are making an impact worldwide. They share their time, talent and resources with their alma mater to make our university and community stronger.

—Matt Roos ’08
Director of Alumni Affairs

Lynn’s newest alumni celebrate at commencement on May 11, 2013.
(Inset photos, from top) Alumni stay connected at a Relay for Life event on campus and a New England Revolution soccer match in Boston.
After a meticulous, year-long application process, it all came down to the contents of an ordinary FedEx package delivered to President Kevin M. Ross the morning of Oct. 21, 2011.

Only, this was no run-of-the-mill delivery. Sent by the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD), it contained a contract indicating what so many people had hoped for: Lynn had been chosen from a field of 12 finalists to host a presidential debate.

“We were elated,” recalls President Ross, who tore into the package with his chief of staff, Jason L. Walton.

“We were able to divine that, not only did we have the presidential debate, but we had the final one,” says Walton, who would co-chair Lynn’s Debate Planning Committee with Greg Malfitano ’75, senior vice president for administration.

President Ross asked Malfitano and Lynn’s general counsel, Margaret Ruddy, to come to the office to hear the news.

“We were like kids at holidays,” Malfitano says. “We were so excited, but we had a pact between us that we couldn’t tell anyone.”

That is, until the CPD officially announced the news on Oct. 31.
The day was Halloween, but more significant for Lynn, it was the eve of Founders Day, a university tradition commemorating former president Donald E. Ross’ first visit to campus (then Marymount College) on Nov. 1, 1971. Marymount was on the brink of bankruptcy, and Ross, then president of Wilmington College, came to purchase Marymount’s library books. Instead, he saw the young college’s potential and would lead it to become a dynamic university granting bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees.

And so, on Oct. 31, 2011—almost 40 years following that fortuitous event—a second watershed moment had arrived in the life of Lynn University. Lynn would take its place in the world’s spotlight, as the youngest school to host a modern presidential debate. And, more good news would soon follow: Lynn’s debate would focus on foreign policy—an ideal match for a university with students from 87 nations.

But first, many carefully laid plans had to be put into action.
“IT WAS MASSIVE, the biggest thing we’ve ever done—ever, hands down.”

Building ‘Debate City’

Over the course of the next year, Lynn took on a dizzying array of projects tied to the debate, creating new classes, a K-12 debate curriculum on iTunes U, election-themed events, a presidential history library exhibit, community alliances and, incredibly, a 25-acre “Debate City” on campus.

Behind this new city was a population of faculty, staff and volunteers—from the university, local community and alumni ranks. While some institutions hosting debates hired outside firms to handle the extra workload, Lynn tackled its debate-related tasks mostly with in-house and volunteer support.

Much of the “building” work, for example, fell to two divisions—Administration, led by Malfitano, and Information Technology, led by Lynn Chief Information Officer Christian Boniforti ’02.

Malfitano’s division was responsible for all construction and facilities associated with the debate—from building two new university entrances, to preparing the Debate Hall in the Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wold Performing Arts Center, the Media Filing Center in the gym, additional parking, CPD offices, the candidates’ dressing rooms, an independent power system, and dining and catering spaces. His team also handled transportation services, volunteer coordination, credentialing and event planning. Soon, his mantra, “It’s all in the details,” became known across campus.

“Proper planning pays off, and we had a great team of people,” Malfitano says. “We had planned for everything, with sign-off dates for the entire year. For me, it wasn’t so much about ‘the day of the debate’; it was about the preparation ahead of time.”

On his team were people like Tom Hef-fernán, leading the build-out of the Debate Hall; Matt Chaloux ’05, in charge of the debate site; Amy Greene, arranging all the events associated with the debate, as well as catering services; Ashleigh Fowles ’09, ’10, overseeing ticket distribution and credentialing; Stella Quintero ’08, managing hotel and transportation arrangements; and Angela Barioli ’09, ’11, Lynn’s community liaison also assisting with transportation, credentialing and ticket distribution.

THE DEBATE by the numbers

6.5 MILLION TWEETS

$13.1 MILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT

208 Official Small Business Partners

33,000+ News Stories

476 Volunteers

563 Delegates

4,060 Media

59.2 MILLION TELEVISION VIEWERS

153,265 Website Visitors

2,250 Spectators on Campus

5,000 RED,WHITE & VIEW PASSES

2,000 Pre-Debate Passes

42 TV SCREENS IN MEDIA FILING CENTER

70 Miles of Cabling

Among the many campus preparations done for the debate (this page and next) were transforming the gym into a Media Filing Center, preparing the Debate Hall in the Wold Performing Arts Center, and creating a wireless network to support 3,000 to 5,000 additional users, a wireless data center and a 1,300-line phone system.
Getting wired—and wireless

Meanwhile, Boniforti’s team in IT was charged with creating a wireless computer network to support 3,000 to 5,000 additional users, a separate data center and a 1,300-line telephone system.

“It was massive, the biggest thing we’ve ever done—ever, hands down,” Boniforti says of the effort, which entailed 32 separate projects—including installing 70 miles of cable.

Among those on the IT team were Kevin Kerr ‘01, ’03, serving as assistant project manager; Joey Rego ’02, ’03, helping design and maintain the network infrastructure; Aaron Stanger, in charge of the cabling installation; and Maria Piret, handling debate ticketing and the Rate Card Desk, plus helping coordinate volunteers.

“Whenever you picked up the phone and had a dial tone, that was us,” says Rego. “Whenever you connected to the Internet, that was us taking care of the network backbone.”

While Rego and his IT colleagues did much of the hands-on work, corporate partners including AT&T, Cisco, Corning, Dex Imaging, General Cabling, Lenovo, Modcomp, Panduit, T-Mobile, TCS, Tegile and Verizon provided equipment and additional expertise.

It all came together flawlessly for the debate, and the technological enhancements yielded lasting benefits for Lynn: better and faster connectivity for the entire campus, plus the “tech muscle” for a new tablet-based learning program for freshmen in fall 2013. Every Lynn freshman will receive an iPad mini loaded with their core curriculum courses, digital reader versions of the core curriculum readers, and useful apps. Students will have interactive content and learning tools at their fingertips. And there’s a bonus: they’ll save up to...
“After the debate, a couple of students brought me thank-you cards that said, ‘This was THE BEST OPPORTUNITY I’ve ever had in my life.’”

Bonding moments

Lynn has always been a close-knit campus, but taking on a gargantuan task like a presidential debate strengthened ties. Staff from departments that typically did not interact with one another now worked side by side, and as a bonus, they forged new bonds with students.

IT, for example, worked with Facilities to prepare the Media Filing Center and with Financial Assistance Services to operate a Rate Card Desk that fulfilled orders from the media for goods and services.

“We got to appreciate what they do, and they appreciated the hard work we put in,” says Boniforti. “That helped us. For instance, we later implemented a project with Maintenance. Having that bond from the debate, I think, helped that project move quickly.”

Fowles was grateful for her diverse group of volunteers in producing thousands of credentials. “Our credentialing center volunteers were a great mix of staff, faculty and students,” she says. “And as a person working in administration, I’m not always lucky enough to have that daily interaction with students.”

“Getting to work with the students was really cool,” agrees IT’s Stanger. “They went above and beyond, and stayed until everything was done.” After the debate, IT even hired one student volunteer, Leo Oikonomidis, for its Help Desk. While an IT debate volunteer, the sophomore from Athens, Greece, worked some days until 1 a.m., helping install the many miles of cable.

Student photographer gets up close

NICOLE SEIDMAN, born and raised in Boca Raton, worked as a student photographer for the CPD. Debate Planning Committee co-chairs Jason Walton and Greg Malfitano asked her to be their student photographer to capture the moments when they met Mitt Romney and Barack Obama.

“My parents were with me and I had never seen their jaws uncontrollably drop,” Seidman says. “I couldn’t believe the honor I had been given. I was going to be just feet away from the presidential candidates and taking their photos for my school.

“The weekend leading up to the debate was thrilling and exhilarating, just being on campus gave me chills,” she adds. “There was no calming my nerves. I was taking a picture of the President of the United States and his running mate! I got access to picture opportunities very few students had. My credential made me feel extremely important.”

The tables were turned on Seidman when she had her photo taken with both candidates. Getting a photo with the president, she says, was an “absolutely surreal moment.”

“President Obama came in with a big smile and seemed thrilled to be meeting the executive staff of Lynn,” she says. He joked and laughed with Kevin Ross saying, ‘You are the president of this fine university? Did you just graduate? I used to be young once, too.’”

After her photo session, she went to the Media Filing Center, which had been empty the last time she was there. “The empty chairs and tables were now occupied by a sea of hungry media representatives all awaiting their involvement in this historic event. My incredible 17-hour journey through political history; my indescribable odyssey had come to an end. My experience might have been over, but the memories of the day will stay with me for a lifetime. Thank you, Lynn University!”
“He worked so well with our team, we just had to hire him,” says Kerr.

The events staff was fortunate to have some familiar students join their ranks. “In our office, there are just three of us, and we had to be in a lot of places at the same time,” says Greene. “So, we pulled in students who had worked for us before. We put them in leadership roles, and they took charge.”

“I had students working in the parking lots—probably not the first place you’d want to work, and the hours were outrageous,” says Barioli. “But they dedicated themselves to their assignments. They did an awesome job all around.”

“I remember our volunteer meetings were packed with students. They were so eager to be there,” says Piret. “The students assigned to the Rate Card Desk were amazing. Once they were in, they were really in.”

Quintero, who supervised student volunteers on the Hospitality Desk, heard rave reviews about students from area businesses. “Members of the industry—general managers of hotels—said, ‘We want your students. They are amazing.’ After the debate, a couple of students brought me thank-you cards that said, ‘This was the best opportunity I’ve ever had in my life.’”

The academic transformation

The physical transformation of Lynn’s campus into “Debate City” was only one part of this amazing journey. Yet to come was the academic transformation—providing what Lynn students and faculty have described in no uncertain terms as their once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

There is a reason the CPD chooses college campuses to host presidential debates. It is a rare learning opportunity that is unparalleled.

CPD Senior Adviser Peter Eyre says that while filming the debate in a television studio would be the easier option logistically, candidates “prefer to be in a setting with a live audience.”

Although candidates have debated at locations other than colleges and universities in the past, Eyre says hosting debates at colleges benefits the CPD and college students alike.

“A core part of [the CPD’s] mission is education and civic engagement, and it works really well with what the colleges and universities are trying to accomplish,” Eyre says.

To that end, Lynn added 80 debate-related courses, developed a free K-12 iTunes U curriculum for use by teachers to incorporate into their curriculum, and hosted dozens of election-themed events that all led up to the big day.

“We wanted to ensure that we take full advantage of this event to create an extensive and rewarding teachable moment for our student body.”

AS LYNN WAS PREPARING FOR HISTORY to be made on its campus, it also was showcasing U.S. presidential history with a wide-ranging exhibit in its library Sept. 27, 2012 through Jan. 21, 2013. Titled “The Front Row Seat to Presidential History” and sponsored by NCCI, the display spanned George Washington’s time to the present. Buttons, badges and bumper stickers chronicled presidential campaigns through the centuries. There was an 1800s campaign torch and—believe it or not—bedroom slippers carrying the likenesses of Ronald and Nancy Reagan.

Bringing history to life for hundreds of visitors were the following:

• more than 100 items from John Clark’s collection of political memorabilia
• artifacts from the personal collection of American Studies professor Robert Watson
• a voting machine and “butterfly ballot” from the 2000 presidential election
• original illustrations by award-winning Sun-Sentinel political cartoonist Chan Lowe
• collections of Barbara Lucey, Susan Gillis and the Boca Raton Historical Society

A second exhibit, “The presidents Helping Children,” added later, gave visitors yet another perspective of our nation’s leaders.

Double vision: (left photo, l to r) Students A.J. Mercincavage, Andrew Lippi and Eric Gooden stand in for (right photo, l to r) Mitt Romney, debate moderator Bob Scheiffer and President Barack Obama.
“We wanted to ensure that we take full advantage of this event to create an extensive and rewarding teachable moment for our student body,” President Ross says.

“They embraced this whole notion that the debate is a larger commitment to education,” says Eyre of Lynn.

There was no precedent for this kind of event on campus, but when all was said and done, the effect was far-reaching and long-lasting for the students and faculty at Lynn University.

The little engine that could

“I thought President Ross viewed us as kind of the little engine that knew it could, and we’re so damned little, we didn’t know we couldn’t,” says Robert Watson.

Though his official title at Lynn is American Studies coordinator, he is a lecturer, author and media analyst, and his knowledge of all things presidential and historical is daunting. He doesn’t so much teach history as tell stories. So, he was a natural as a faculty expert during the debate.

“I was in the thick of it,” Watson says. “The night of the debate I went 72 hours straight without sleep. I would just change my tie so I didn’t always look the same. I ran on raw adrenaline. It was my intellectual bungee-jumping; my mid-life rush.”

And it gave him a lot of information to bring into the classroom. “It was transformational for my students,” he says. “These kids are just motivated. You can’t put a price tag on that.

“I have better attendance in all my classes, more engagement, more participation. Students feel better about the campus. They’re more civic-minded. I have better conversations in my classes now, I swear, about politics and history than I did before.”

Doing the ‘happy dance’

Marcheta Wright, international relations professor, did the “happy dance” when she found out Lynn’s debate topic was foreign policy.

In her classes, “The Debates Go Global,” she “flipped the debate on its head” and looked at what the rest of the world thought of our debate process here. In a teleconference after the debate, students in the Congo and her students talked about the debate for an hour and a half.

“Students got very excited, and we had a really good exchange. It literally took the course to a global...”
level. This was the icing on the cake for my students. They came away with a very positive experience and were talking about it the rest of the semester."

Even many of the students who had little interest in politics pre-debate came away with greater knowledge and a deeper understanding of the political process.

“Before the debate, a lot of my friends and I weren’t involved in politics,” says Stephen Proana-Amaya, a junior multimedia journalism major from Rockville, Md. “It really helped us open up to the importance of voting and politics and helped build excitement. It didn’t just change the campus; it changed the curriculum and a lot of different things for me personally.”

Their ‘aha’ moments

And those with an interest in politics, international relations and communications had their “aha” moments, their vision translated to reality and their enthusiasm and appetites whetted.

“Who knows how a single moment—like being on the TV news—might have instilled confidence in those kids, or maybe one of them says ‘I want to be an anchor,’” says Watson. “That single moment could be what makes them want to go to law school or go into politics or be a diplomat.”

Eric Gooden, a senior criminal justice major from Detroit, was President Obama’s stand-in during the debate. It’s no surprise as the tall, lanky student looks uncannily like him and does a spot-on impersonation as well.

“When I was up on stage as a stand-in with Bob Schieffer I was nervous because I didn’t know what he would ask me, and suddenly he says, ‘So, President Obama, what are you going to be for Halloween?’ It was so unexpected. I said, ‘Spiderman.’”

Gooden, vice president of the school’s College Democrats club, says he learned a lot about himself from the whole experience. “I want to get into politics even more, even though it was already my dream.”

“Eric got to meet Joe Biden, Madeleine Albright, Ron Kirk; he went to the inauguration; he got to play Obama; he was on CSPAN; he was interviewed by CNN,” says Watson. “I mean, what undergraduate student gets to do this? Now, Eric’s No. 1 plan is to go into politics, so this has been transformational to him.”

MAURICIO BURGOS, a junior aviation management major from Colombia, volunteered with the CPD Media Help Desk, was interviewed by an ABC reporter and a Cuban reporter. “The whole student body was finally together on a single day; everyone was so proud,” he says.

JESSICA WEISSMAN, a freshman psychology major from San Francisco, photographed the event during her 13-hour shifts capturing all kinds of news broadcasts from all political analysts and was Chuck Todd’s personal photographer for a day. “No one knew Lynn University. Now when I say I go to Lynn University, they say, ‘That’s where the debate was.’ We became more well-known everywhere.”

CARLOS DE LA RIVA, an MBA student from Guatemala, worked with CNN as a runner and did everything from setting up desks to running to the airport to Office Depot, was a sit-in for news rehearsals with Candy Crawley, moderator of the second debate, and was interviewed by Entertainment Tonight. “As a business student here at Lynn, it was a huge opportunity for us to network and get to know people from around the country and local community,” he says. De la Riva was surprised by the number of responsibilities that were assigned to him. “They gave me a rental car and said, ‘Go.’ It was just unbelievable.” And he learned you can’t take no for an answer. “It taught me a lot about problem-solving and gave me more confidence in myself.”

MARK SPIRO, a graduate student from London, was a runner for CNN. “I was most surprised by how many opportunities were available to students, how students were involved at every level.”

ZACK CAPLAN, a graduate student from Philadelphia, Pa., was a videographer inside the Debate Hall. “The way I think about it, there isn’t any event short of a Super Bowl or the Grammys where there is so much coverage,” he says. “I feel very lucky to have been here for that. We were in the right place at the right time. I think everyone had their own little piece of fame. One of the videos I made saw a spike in views.”
Alumni share the debate experience

Among the hundreds of volunteers helping with the presidential debate were our own alumni, many of whom took time off from their busy jobs to lend a hand.

Two prime examples were Jonathan Weitz ’10 and Scott Plumb ’09, ’10. Weitz is a Telly Award-winning video producer with his own company, Weitz Studios, in New York City. Plumb is an account executive with HiConversion, a thriving new e-commerce revenue performance management software and service company in Boca Raton.

For the debate, Weitz worked as a videographer, and Plumb assisted the CPD with ticketing and credentialing. And neither would have traded the experience for anything.

Says Weitz, “I love Lynn. I thought, ‘How great would it be to be a part of a historic event like a presidential debate?’”

Plumb says, “It was just something that I couldn’t pass up. Lynn University has given me so much, and if there is anything I can do to help out, I will.”

Both felt an obligation to do their best so that others could share in the debate experience. And they succeeded.

Weitz first had to grapple with the enormity of his task. “How do you cover an event as big as a presidential debate? How do you put that into a video?” he says. “I thought, ‘The presidential debate is a story, but there are many smaller stories that come with it. Let’s find those and then show and tell part of this bigger story.’”

One of his videos focused on members of the local and national press covering the debate. Another featured a Lynn student who won a ticket to attend the debate. “We even had her call her father on speakerphone and recorded his reaction to her winning the ticket,” Weitz recalls.

For Plumb, volunteering for the debate brought back two big experiences of his while he was a Lynn student—serving as a White House intern and working for Lynn’s dean of administration, Tom Heffernan, when the Wold Performing Arts Center was being built.

“When we were finishing the building, we always said, ‘What do you think is going to happen here?’” Plumb recalls. “We never thought that two years later we’d be hosting a presidential debate.”

And yet, here Plumb was, back on campus witnessing it firsthand. “Seeing the Secret Service, the media and foreign press brought back a lot of old memories,” Plumb says, recalling his White House days. “I always said that I wish I could have shared that experience.”

The night of the debate, Plumb got the chance. A CPD staff member offered him a ticket to the debate. Plumb tried to refuse, but the staffer insisted he take it. Once inside the Debate Hall, Plumb found he had a prime seat but noticed that a Lynn student across the way had an obstructed view. So, he walked over to the student and offered to exchange seats.

“I said, ‘I know what an important event this is for you. Long story short, I’ve already had a presidential experience. I want you to take my ticket.’”

“So, she thanked me, and as soon as I sat in her seat, I got a tap on the shoulder from a member of the Secret Service,” Plumb recalls. “He says, ‘Don’t move. Those tickets are nontransferable.’

“I thought, ‘Oh great. I’m going to get thrown out of the debate!’” Plumb says with a laugh. “Then, he comes back two minutes later with someone from the CPD, and they say, ‘We saw what you did and can’t tell you how nice that was. You deserve a better seat.’ They gave me a center seat. … Good things do happen. Both of us were able to have good seats.”

It was just one of many happy endings that night.
“It was a perspective of the real world to me in my career. **IT MADE ME MORE COURAGEOUS** in my field. I had to go out there and get the stories that ‘real journalists’ do. It was fun and life-changing.”

‘What my future will look like’

There wasn’t exactly a crystal ball, but so many students got a glimpse into their futures.

Jennifer Murillo, a junior multimedia journalism major from Costa Rica, was a social media volunteer, did a Google Hangout with Chuck Todd and the president of political news for Google Plus, interviewed the director for Twitter as well as Marco Rubio, Debbie Wasserman-Schultz and John McCain. She was so impressed that all these networks were coming to campus and there were all these opportunities to get interviews or help out.

“For my field, it was really productive,” she says. “It was a perspective of the real world to me in my career. It made me more courageous in my field. I had to go out there and get the stories that ‘real journalists’ do. It was fun and life-changing.”

Helena Suba, a junior communication radio, TV and print major from Port Charlotte, Fla., worked for the marketing department as photographer. “As you start out you’re not really a professional per se; you’re kind of scared to take pictures when everybody has lenses this big, but it helped me learn my camera better.” Suba, who photographed the stand-ins, got professional photos out of it. “If you type in Lynn Debate, you can see my pictures with all the others—and they look exactly the same!”

“I got to understand what it’s like to be a journalist,” says Proana-Amaya. “The most important thing I’ve learned from all this is exactly what my future could look like. Experiences I’ve had are once-in-a lifetime.”

‘That extra spark’

Wright took note of the experience from the international student perspective.

“What was fascinating to me was that many of the students who most explicitly delivered that extra spark were the international students,” she says. She felt they went way above and beyond in their volunteer commitment both on and off campus.

“So many of them latched onto this opportunity and just ran with it as far as they possibly could,” Wright says. “It was really a pretty amazing experience to see this kind of learning happening and that kind of motivation. It was really impressive.”

Four of those students are in the Washington Internship Institute and are “taking the city by storm, just as I knew they would,” says Wright. “They are having an amazing experience up there; it was a perfect ending to everything they did in fall semester.”

Carolina Filippi, a junior international relations major from Venezuela, was one of those students and was bubbling with enthusiasm over her debate experience and what it meant to her.

“It was a window into what my future career prospects would be like, as to what kind of path I would like to pursue,” she says. “It definitely cemented and confirmed that I wanted to pursue international relations as a career choice. The internships, connections and contacts that I made...
"WE DIDN’T JUST ‘DO A DEBATE.’ It was the curriculum and the engagement of the community that, I think, will be the most lasting legacy of this event, the debate. … We did it our way and in a way that only Lynn does.”

would not have happened had the debate not taken place here.”

“A number of our international students are planning on joining the diplomatic corps of their respective countries, so to be put in this position here, was an incredible learning experience,” says Wright. “And, yeah, they really did get it.”

Filippi was a runner for NBC and MSNBC, was featured on CSPAN, was included in front-page stories by two major Venezuelan newspapers, worked for NBC Nightly News, and met NBC White House correspondent Chuck Todd and Sen. John McCain.

“The thing I learned the most from this whole experience was that hard work really does pay off and the more you exert yourself in a task, people will notice and that, in turn, will open up more opportunities for you,” says Filippi. “The debate changed my career prospects forever.”

An ‘amazingly wonderful mosaic’

It was a year in the making, months of planning, hours of blood, sweat and tears, once-in-a-lifetime experiences—and then it was over.

“The adrenaline rush was unparalleled,” says Quintero. “It was amazing—the team of people working together and the camaraderie that developed as a consequence of that. There is nothing like it.”

Says Chaloux, “We didn’t just ‘do a debate.’ It was the curriculum and the engagement of the community that, I think, will be the most lasting legacy of this event, the debate. … We did it our way and in a way that only Lynn does.”

He adds, “A few days after the debate, I watched one of our videos that showed a student talking about her debate experience. She gushed about it and how proud she was to be a Lynn student. It was eloquent and lovely. When she finished, I said to myself, ‘You’re welcome. I did it for you.’ It made me feel that everything I had done had been worth it.”

The debate left lasting impressions on Wright and Watson as well.

“It was the totality of the experience that stands out,” Wright says. “It’s just how the whole thing fit together—the whole ebb and flow. Not just of the day, but of the year leading up to it. It was fascinating and interesting to watch how the whole thing came together—from the time we were first told that we had applied for it. In a sense, to step back and watch the institution go through this process, and watch how all the pieces kind of fit together in this amazingly wonderful mosaic that we ended up with—because in a way, that’s how I think of it—that’s the President Ross piece of it and what he did. And the technology piece that Chris Boniforti had to absolutely lose his mind over doing. There’s the academic piece of it where all faculty came together and crafted. And then there was the student piece of it with the students just embracing this whole thing.

“All of those pieces—it was almost like a really nice mosaic or jigsaw puzzle coming together—and by the end of it, we had the picture that is the Lynn debate experience,” she continues. “I put that word ‘experience’ in there because it really was an experience; it wasn’t just an event. We did it and we did it well. I think we all collectively deserve to be proud of what happened here and what we created.”

And as the kick-off to the 50th anniversary of the “little university that could,” it is fitting that, as Watson says, “it is probably the biggest thing in 50 years that we’ve done. All of us realize that we as a campus did something extraordinary. As we said in our library exhibit, we had a front row seat to history.”

Whether you couldn’t join us on campus for the 2012 presidential debate, or you’d just like to relive the experience, you can travel back in time via the Internet. Here are links to photos, videos, transcripts and more.

debate2012.lynn.edu – Lynn’s official debate website. See CSPAN’s pre-debate program with President Ross, Lynn’s news archive and more.
debate2012.lynn.edu/photos - Lynn’s debate photo collections on Flickr
debate2012.lynn.edu/videos – Lynn’s debate-related videos on YouTube
I think we all collectively DESERVE TO BE PROUD of what happened here and what we created.”