Engaged with the Community

**An Interview with Dr. Jared L. Cohon,
President, Carnegie Mellon University**

EDITOR'S NOTE *Since becoming president of Carnegie Mellon University in 1997, Jared L. Cohon has guided the university's global expansion and has successfully led the university on a variety of fronts, including diversity, new areas of research strength, and economic development in southwestern Pennsylvania. He serves as Vice Chairman of The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Co-Chair of The Technology Collaborative, and founding Co-Chairman of the Pittsburgh Life Sciences Greenhouse. He has extensive government service, including his membership on the U.S. Homeland Security Advisory Council and past chairmanship of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board. Before joining Carnegie Mellon, Dr. Cohon served as Dean of the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies at Yale. He started his teaching and research career in 1973 at Johns Hopkins University, where he also served as Assistant and Associate Dean of Engineering and Vice Provost for Research. Dr. Cohon earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Pennsylvania in 1969 and a doctoral degree in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1973.*

Jared L. Cohon

INSTITUTION BRIEF *Ranked 27th in the world by London's* The Times *Higher Education Supplement, Carnegie Mellon University (www.cmu.edu) is a global research university with more than 11,000 students, 83,900 living alumni, and more than 4,900 faculty and staff. Carnegie Mellon is one of the largest and fastest-growing universities in terms of global expansion. The university is recognized for its world-class arts and technology programs, collaboration across disciplines, and innovative leadership in education. The university just launched "Inspire Innovation," a $1-billion comprehensive campaign to build on its unparalleled success. Carnegie Mellon consists of seven schools and colleges: Carnegie Institute of Technology (the College of Engineering), the College of Fine Arts, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the H. John Heinz III College (Public Policy and Management and Information Systems and Management), the Mellon College of Science, the School of Computer Science, and the Tepper School of Business. Carnegie Mellon has campuses in the Silicon Valley and in Qatar.*

What are the strengths of Carnegie Mellon from a global perspective?

Carnegie Mellon stands among the world's elite top-tier global universities and is well known in many fields, from the arts to developing the next generation of technologies. Carnegie Mellon's faculty, students, and alumni shape the world and impact people's lives.

We are especially strong in information technology, which pervades everything we do here. Our School of Computer Science is ranked number one. We're in the top five in computer engineering and the Tepper School of Business is generally ranked one or two when it comes to IT and business. Our Heinz College is ranked number one for IT and policy. The life sciences and biotechnology were a priority for us in the past decade. We've greatly expanded what we do there, much of it in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh – our next-door neighbor, which is very strong in medicine. Our emphasis is now on expanding our strengths in energy and the environment.

Carnegie Mellon is equally as strong in the arts. We have a College of Fine Arts with five schools: architecture, art, design, drama and music. Our Drama School has produced many generations of stars and leaders, both on and off the stage and screen. We're also strong in visual arts and design. In fact, Carnegie Mellon was the first university in America to create a bachelor's degree in drama, and the first university to create an industrial design program 75 years ago.

Increasingly, technology and the arts are coming together in a way they never did before. One example of this synergy is the Entertainment Technology Center (ETC), co-founded 10 years ago by Don Marinelli, a drama professor, and Randy Pausch, a computer science professor. This program focuses on game design for entertainment and serious games that can be used for training, or even to inspire peacemaking. It's a great example of how Carnegie Mellon can bring together technology and the arts and produce something magical.

You have focused on the global expansion and reach of the university. Can you highlight the importance of that, and some of the efforts around global expansion?

About 10 years ago, we recognized that globalization was a potent force in the world and Carnegie Mellon committed itself to being part of that, not just in America, but where the economies were transforming, growing, and becoming stronger. This commitment took two approaches: one involves the nature of what we do in Pittsburgh, where we've created much more content on international issues in our curricula. Additionally, the student body in Pittsburgh is very international.

The other approach was taking Carnegie Mellon to the world, and we now have a campus in Qatar, where we're one of six American universities in Education City. We have graduate programs in Adelaide, Australia; Portugal; Singapore; Greece; and Japan and many other activities in Korea, India, China and other emerging areas. So we are becoming an increasingly global university both in Pittsburgh and around the world.

How critical is the role of Carnegie Mellon within southwestern Pennsylvania as a catalyst in terms of community engagement?

It is very important. We stand out as a private university that is deeply engaged with its community. We are rated in a "Best Neighbor" survey among the top U.S. universities for our civic partnerships. And for the third year in a row, the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll ranked Carnegie Mellon for our national and community service. The development of Pittsburgh and southwest Pennsylvania is a strategic priority, with a particular focus on the creation of jobs and companies. Today, the university is one of the region's economic drivers, largest employers, and centers of innovation, bringing cutting-edge companies and jobs to southwest Pennsylvania. We changed our technology transfer policies to make it easier and faster to create companies, and therefore create jobs. We are ranked second among all U.S. universities for company creation per faculty member. We also joined forces with the University of Pittsburgh to create a better environment for information technology and life science companies to get started and thrive here. We've used our own efforts to attract existing companies like Google, Apple, Intel, Disney, and others.

Pittsburgh was host for the G20 meeting in September, which was surprising for many people, but not for us. A big part of the reason for Pittsburgh's success story was the work being done by institutions like Carnegie Mellon, the University of Pittsburgh, and UPMC (the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center), and Pittsburgh's many thriving educational institutions. We have been central to the transformation of the economy here, which is strong and doing relatively well during the recession. ●