PRESIDENT GILDA A. BARABINO, PH.D.



2020-2021

Inprecedented Challenges

Olin College led by President Gilda A. Barabino, Ph.D., navigated a period of profound change—

marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, its first presidential transition in over 20 years, and urgent financial pressures. These challenges prompted swift action, including a shift to remote instruction, hiring and salary freezes, and the College's first reduction in force. Amidst uncertainty, Olin committed to a bold new vision—advancing equity in engineering education while securing long-term financial sustainability. This period of action sparked transformation, a reinforcement of Olin's values and its resolve to build a stronger, more inclusive future.







2020

July / August

Evolved a Hands-on Curriculum for Remote

I*nstruction

July

Laid a Path for Financial Sustainability, Including Implementation of Both a Hiring and Salary Freeze September

Introduced Strategic Doing Framework

Joined National Academies Action Collaborative on Sexual Harassment in the Academy **October**

Formed New Office of the President Team & Launched DEI Working Group

Offered First Voluntary Separation Incentive Program **November**

Hosted Financial Deep Dive Sessions for Faculty, Staff and Students

2021

JanuaryPresented a Vision for Olin's Future

Hosted a Virtual Community Workshop **February**

Launched Organization and Culture Team

Hosted NECHE Accreditation Visit Feb/March

Hosted the College's First Virtual Candidates' Week March

Joined AAAS SEA Change Initiative May

Granted first Honorary Degree to Robert Langer, Sc.D.

Instituted a Reduction in Force









2021-2022 Rotting Up Guif Steeves

Whether launching a website redesign, securing \$1M in strategic funding,

or improving our national rankings, under President Barabino's leadership Olin is moving forward with energy, focus and purpose. The work is already underway and it's just getting started.











2021

July Enacted Major Leadership Reorganization

August

Facilitated the Return to Campus

Announced the new Senior Executive Team; sought Nominations for College Council and President's Strategic Advisory Team

September

Moved up in U.S. News & World Report Rankings from #3 to #2



April

Hosted Guest Speaker, Facebook Whistleblower Frances Haugen '06

November

Hosted Discussion about Increasing Healthcare Costs

December

Created President's Strategic Advisory Team

Announced College Council Members



2022

January Launched Website Redesign

Presented Strategic Vision to Board of Trustees

March

Moderated a Plenary Session on Belonging at Venture Well Open 22 Conference



May

Secured \$1M for the Presidential Strategic Initiatives Fund

Obtained Approval for the Strategic Plan

Inaugurated as Olin's Second President

June

Raised \$1M in Unrestricted Funds for the Olin Fund to Support Strategic Plan

Presented at the League of Women Voters of Needham Annual Meeting





2022-2023

Figheering for Everyone

With the approval of a new five-year strategic plan, Engineering for Everyone,

President Barabino led the Olin community in beginning the difficult work of making engineering education more inclusive, accessible and impact-driven. This means reshaping curriculum, deepening our human-centered approach and inviting new partners into the work ahead.





2022

July

Jumpstarted Strategic Initiatives

August

Represented Olin at the White House and Met with President Biden at the Signing of the CHIPS and Science Act

September

Announced the New Strategic Plan and Began Implementation

October

Hosted Climate Action Summit for State Rep Jake Auchincloss

November

Responded to Calls for Olin to Change its Investment Strategy



2023

January

Delivered Keynote at Annual MLK, Jr. Memorial Breakfast in Framingham



February

Hosted Guest Speaker and Author Linda Villarosa

March/April

Hired Major Gift Officer to Build Fundraising Capacity

Developed 10-year Capital Plan

Represented Olin in AAAS Cuba Delegation Delivered Keynote Address at AAAS Annual Meeting, Sponsored a Booth on the Exhibit Floor, and Hosted an Olin-Style Story Slam, as Well as a Media Event

Finalized a 5-Year Climate Action Plan

May

Managed Transition in Leadership in the Office of Admission and Financial Aid

Received Rice University Distinguished Alumni Award









The impact-focused framework of College as a Living Lab came to life in 2023-2024,

with the design and implementation of a number of experimental courses and strategic curriculum design projects, as well as the formation of the student culture-focused Presidential Action Collaborative. A major critical campus infrastructure project was launched to transition the central enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. The College also expanded its footprint in the greater world through a formal agreement with Babson College to work more closely together, and through the founding, with a group of R1 universities, the EDGE Consortium aimed at achieving the educational goals of the CHIPS and Science Act.



2023

August

Broke Ground on Solar Array to Improve Campus Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

Welcomed the Class of 2027, Olin's Largest Incoming Class to Date

Introduced Olin's First Visiting Community Artist, Elisa Hamilton

Introduced New Leadership in both the Office of Admission and Academic Affairs



September

Hosted Informal Presidential Office Hours for Olin Community Members

Co-taught Real-World Lessons in Creating Impact with Leif Jentoft '09, Gillian Epstein and Lawrence Neeley

Awarded the 2024 Dickson Prize in Science by Carnegie Mellon University

October

Tuition Amendment is Approved by Board of Trustees

Hosted the AAAS Board Alongside an Olin Board of Trustees Meeting

Signed an MOU with Babson to Collaborate on Technical Entrepreneurship Programming

Co-Founded the Edge Consortium to Achieve Goals of CHIPS and Science Act

December

Joined National Academies Action Collaborative on Improving the Pathways for Women of Color in Tech





2024

January

Launched College-wide ERP Project

Represented Olin at Needham's MLK Day Event

February

Laid Groundwork and Launched CaLL Framework

Honored at NSBE's 2024 INSPIRE STEM Gala

May

Began Implementation of College as a Living Lab

Launched President's Oval

Gave Remarks at The White House Summit on STEMM Equity and Excellence

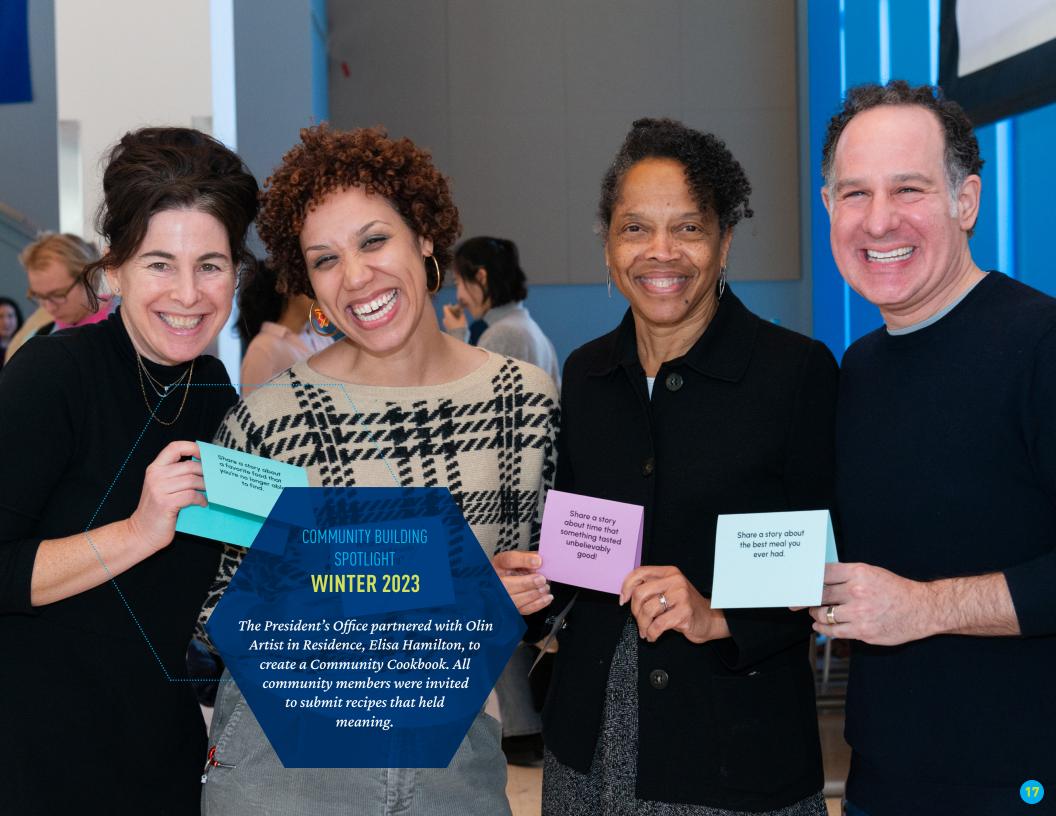
Hosted Leadership Lab (a precursor to the Olin Circle of Advocates)













In 2024-2025, under President Barabino's leadership Olin made great strides in advancing the agenda of College as a Living Lab.

A faculty-led design team began a comprehensive redesign of the Olin curriculum, which will continue into the 2025-2026 academic year and includes a course open to all students interested in active participation in this historic effort. Faculty and staff are also focused on how to incorporate emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, into the curriculum, both as a topic and an educational tool.

A related effort to secure private donations to renovate labs and design spaces to serve this new curriculum has raised more than \$200,000 to date, with the renovation work starting in Summer 2025.

The Olin Circle of Advocates is fully engaged in this process as well, expanding Olin's influence, increasing awareness of Olin's brand and reputation, fostering an environment of innovation and continuous improvement, and leveraging relationships with professional networks, prospective funders, and other constituencies as appropriate.





2024 **July Rollout Change to Merit Scholarship**

October

Hosted First Combined Alumni and Family Weekend Featuring Speaker Frans Johansson

Began Curriculum Redesign / Innovation Work as part of CaLL

> Olin College of Engineering

November

Secured first Sustainability Initiatives Research Collaboration (SIRC) **Partner**



Olin Recognized by Women's Edge Boston as a Top Women Run **Business in Massachusetts**



2025

February

President Barabino Delivers the 2024 **Dickson Prize Lecture** at Carnegie Mellon University, Recognized for **Contributions to Science** and Engineering

April

First Meeting of Olin Circle of Advocates is Convened

May

Signed AAC&U's Call for Constructive **Engagement**







Inside the Oval

President Barabino led a robust program to strengthen the Olin Community, especially after the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Noteworthy community building efforts included:

- Expanding the scope of Convocation to encompass a celebration of return to campus for all students, faculty and staff, along with a warm welcome for first-year students, new faculty and new staff. Inclusive activities spanned building a cairn together (2021), book discussions with faculty authors Sara Hendren (2022) and Deb Chachra (2024), and reflections on the summer reading with Caitrin Lynch (2023).
- Leading a strategic planning process that included all faculty, staff and students, to create the Engineering for Everyone strategic plan. This inclusive approach resulted in enthusiastic community support for the vision and direction of this strategic plan.
- Following the development of Engineering for Everyone, the College as a Living Lab implementation plan included robust teams of faculty, staff and students to develop specific objectives for curriculum, sustainability, and equity and access.

- Building connection between both people and also between artistic creativity and engineering innovation – through community art. President Barabino welcomed Olin's first community artist, Elisa Hamilton, in 2022.
 With the presidential inauguration as inspiration, Oliners and other inauguration guests all participated in making art to commemorate the day.
- Infusing creativity and art-making throughout the campus culture. With President Barabino's support, Elisa Hamilton offered a very popular studio art co-curricular for two years, led pop-up art events throughout the academic year, and created a gallery within the Office of the President to display and celebrate student creativity.

IMPACT

Beyond the Oval

President Barabino involved Olin in a broad range of activities and organizations, raising the college's profile on both national and international stages. Here are just a few:

- In 2022, President Barabino was invited to attend the signing of the historic CHIPS and Science Act and to meet President Biden in the White House Rose Garden, making Olin one of the only colleges to be represented in this group
- At the 2023 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in Washington, DC,
 Olin sponsored:
- Meet the President event for science reporters
- Science Story Slam, led by Professors Jonathan Adler and Gillian Epstein
- About Olin booth, featuring make-your-own-hopper kits
- In 2024, Olin was celebrated by the Women's Edge Boston as one of the top women-led businesses in Massachusetts
- President Barabino and Olin Trustee Lynn Pasquarella, president of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, represented Olin at the conference recognizing the 100th Anniversary of Sun-Yat Sen University, November 2024

- Through the Engineering for Everyone strategic framework, President Barabino strengthened Olin's ability to achieve the founders' goal for the college to be an important and constant contributor to the advancement of engineering education in America to transform engineering education both in America and throughout the world. During her presidency, historic partnerships were established between:
 - Franklin Cummings Institute, which received a significant grant to work with Olin on curriculum redesign, inspired by conversations between President Barabino and Franklin Cummings' president Aisha Francis
- Kyiv School of Economics, which will work directly with Olin to develop a curriculum for a new undergraduate engineering school in Ukraine
- As a direct response to the opportunities presented by the CHIPS and Science Act, President Barabino, with the encouragement of Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, joined other women university presidents to form the EDGE Consortium, which aims to create educational opportunities tied to semiconductor jobs and research



Olin made history when I was appointed as the second president of Olin College of Engineering, and I expect that Olin College will continue on an impactful trajectory. Under my leadership, we weathered COVID-19; implemented the first reduction in force in the history of the College; delivered the strategic plan, Engineering for Everyone, and provided a novel framework for its implementation (and distinction of Olin from others), College as a Living Lab; created the Olin Circle of Advocates, an action-oriented resource group; created a vehicle for impactful student engagement and leadership development, the Presidential Action Collaborative; rose from #3 to #2 in the US News & World Report rankings; changed the tuition model; and set the College on a viable path to achieve financial sustainability."

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