

a span of time—of having him as a member of our faculty.”

Menino was a distinctly unprodigal son of Hyde Park, the boy who never left home. He was the son of a factory foreman for Westinghouse who aspired for his son to get a college degree. But after taking night classes at Boston College while selling insurance, Menino dropped out, informing his dad that the man he idolized, Harry Truman, didn’t go to college, either. A generation later, he outdid his hero. While representing Hyde Park on the city council, he earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. He received an honorary degree from BU in 2001, and at the 2013 Commencement ceremony was awarded the Boston University Medallion for his service to the community.

In his memoir, *Mayor for a New America*, written with Jack Beatty, Menino recalls that the 5,000 friends and supporters attending his first inaugural party were entertained by what he calls “the representatives of the New America”—multiracial, multicultural, LGBT-friendly—“rising in the old city.” Among the entertainers were a Roma band, gay two-steppers, a Spanish theater group, and a Chinese lion dance. He was committed, as he put it, “to lifting the cloud of racism over the city” that had hovered in the wake of Boston’s painful busing crisis of the 1970s. Celtics legend Bill Russell (Hon.’02) remarked in 2004 that under Menino’s leadership, “We see a Boston that is making every effort to be one of our country’s most inclusive and progressive cities.”

Menino was one of the first elected officials in the country to endorse gay marriage. As he viewed the 2013 Gay Pride parade from his wheelchair on the sidelines, a gay woman approached him, teared up, and told him she’d moved to Boston years before after her parents disowned her. She thanked him for making her feel that her new city welcomed her. Menino would later write in his memoir, “As I battle cancer, her words bring me contentment.” ss

Science Gets a New Front Door on Comm Ave

Center will bridge disciplines, foster collaboration across sciences

For decades, some of the most exciting research at BU has been unfolding in a row of nondescript buildings hidden on Cummington Mall that were originally designed for carriage manufacture, not life sciences exploration.

Now President Robert A. Brown is giving science a more prominent address on the University’s main thoroughfare. In late May or early summer, BU will break ground at what is now a parking lot at 610 Commonwealth Ave. for its new Center for Integrated Life Sciences & Engineering (CILSE), a \$140 million, nine-story research facility that will bring together life scientists, engineers, and physicians from the Medical and Charles River Campuses. The building will be dedicated to systems neuroscience, cognitive neuroimaging, and biological design. With shared, flexible lab spaces, meeting rooms, and other common areas, it is being designed to encourage the kind of collaborative, interdisciplinary research that will be the hallmark of 21st-century science.

CILSE will be built adjacent to historic Morse Auditorium and is expected to be finished in late 2016 or early 2017. It will have lab space for approximately 160 researchers, postdoctoral students, staff, and 270 graduate students as well as space for additional faculty. The architects are from Payette, a Boston firm that has built prizewinning science buildings for major research universities and other institutions around the world.

The 170,000-square-foot building will house the Center for Systems Neuroscience, the Biological Design Center, the Center for Sensory Communication and Neuroengineering Technology, the Cognitive Neuroimaging Center, and a 3 Tesla fMRI—a fundamental tool for studying the brain’s trillions of neural connections and how they relate to human behavior. The imaging technol-

The \$140 million, nine-story research facility will have shared, flexible lab spaces.



ogy will serve faculty from schools and departments across BU’s sprawling neuroscience community—and from other universities around Boston—who study brain topics ranging from how we learn, think, and remember to traumatic brain injury and Alzheimer’s disease.

“In the life sciences and engineering, we have world-class faculty. We need facilities to match,” says Gloria Waters, vice president and associate provost for research. “We decided to invest in better lab space that would bring faculty together in a very unique and interdisciplinary environment.”

BU boasts one of the nation’s largest clusters of researchers in the emerging fields of systems neuroscience, which examines brain function at the cellular, molecular, and cognitive levels, and biological design, which seeks to build new biological systems with the tools and techniques of engineering. These interdisciplinary fields tackle some of the thorniest problems in science and medicine, like the detection and treatment of infectious diseases, how memory works, and the root causes of autism. These problems draw researchers from diverse fields who are currently spread across both campuses.

“One of the great things about BU is that we have spectacular faculty from many different disciplines,” says Waters. “By placing new groups in proximity to one another, we are hoping to develop collaborations that would not happen otherwise and, ultimately, some unique areas of excellence.” BARBARA MORAN AND SARA RIMER