The Starr Foundation

As part of the University’s celebration of philanthropy this month, CUNY is recognizing the remarkable contributions of The Starr Foundation, which stands out as one of the most generous foundation donors in the University’s history.

The Starr Foundation was established in 1955 by Cornelius Vander Starr, an insurance entrepreneur who founded C.V. Starr & Co. and other companies later combined by his successor, Maurice R. Greenberg, into the American International Group, Inc. Mr. Starr, a pioneer of globalization, set up his first insurance venture in Shanghai in 1919. He died in 1968 at the age of 76, leaving his estate to the Foundation.

Several CUNY colleges have benefitted from the Starr Foundation’s strong commitment to public higher education. Baruch College has received more than $11 million including $6 million to establish the C.V. Starr Scholarships to assist needy students and to build a career counseling center, The Starr Career Development Center. The Foundation helped establish the Macaulay Honors College with a $3 million grant, which created a permanent endowment to support Starr Scholars each year.

The Starr Foundation was also one of the founding donors of the Charles B. Rangel Center for Public Service at The City College of New York (CCNY). Its $5 million grant created the C.V. Starr Library, which will consist of archives and memorabilia documenting a history of public service in New York City. The library will further serve as a locus of research and conferences concerning barriers to full participation in public service by underserved minorities.

Starr has also supported a number of smaller programs and centers across the university including the Brooklyn College Academy, the Out In Two program at Borough of Manhattan Community College, the Zicklin Academy of Finance at Baruch College, the City University’s Teaching Opportunity Program and the Hunter College Brookdale Center on Aging.

The Starr Foundation has given almost $20 million to the colleges of CUNY and to support University-wide initiatives. CUNY takes special pride in acknowledging this extraordinary generosity and the Foundation’s unwavering commitment to the University and its mission.