

# How We Did It

First there was the need. Then came the vision, followed by the support. Creating the Chicago GSB Hyde Park Center has taken perseverance, cooperation, and the largest fundraising effort in the business school's history. Alumni generosity has made it happen. *By Patricia Houlihan*

Alumni and friends examine Viñoly's design at the campaign kickoff in 2000.

**B**y the time the GSB kicked off its \$250 million capital campaign in January 2000, the biggest of ideas had taken root. After nearly 50 years, it was time to gather students, faculty, and staff from six buildings around the university campus and build for them a single world-class facility that could meet their needs well into the 21st century. Finding a location was the first hurdle, a challenge met by a university-wide task force that ultimately recommended Woodward Court dormitories come down to provide the site. Just as enormous an obstacle was the cost,

and recruiters,” he said. “So much of graduate education happens outside the classroom. The new Hyde Park Center will provide the space for people to make connections, personal and intellectual.” The Alpers’ gift will name the student study on the first floor.

On March 1, 2000, nearly 200 alumni and friends of the school gathered at Ida Noyes Hall to celebrate the new capital campaign and see the winning design for the center, created by architect Rafael Viñoly. “I think you will agree that in the spirit of Daniel Burnham, we have made no little



Alper

Dan Dry



Booth

Dan Dry



Keller

Dan Dry



May

Dan Dry



Rothman

Kevin Weinstein

estimated at nearly \$125 million. The GSB’s previous capital campaign was \$30 million. Would alumni come forward with their support?

The answer has been a resounding yes.

One of the first to take up the challenge was **Dennis Keller, '68**, who had served on the task force and spoke often about the project with then-dean **Robert S. Hamada**. “What kept Bob up at night was wondering, ‘Where are we going to get the money?’ We had never raised anywhere near that much before,” Keller said.

Keller thought hard about what he could do. “There just wasn’t much of a tradition of financial stewardship and philanthropy for the business school. For generations, people had figured it could take care of itself. What we had to do was make it clear that it was a different time now, and that we could pay for this building.” So he committed \$25 million, the largest single gift ever received by the school, and agreed to help chair the GSB Campaign.

Another early participant was **Andrew Alper, AB '80, MBA '81**. With his wife, Sharon Alper, AB '80, JD '84, he pledged \$5 million to the GSB for the center and agreed to co-chair the campaign with Keller. “I have vivid memories of being crammed into Cox Lounge, which is where I had some of my most memorable discussions with students and faculty

plans,” Hamada told the crowd. “But a building is only a building unless you appreciate what happens inside, and that goes to the core of this capital campaign, which is to advance learning.”

Since dean **Edward A. Snyder** joined the GSB in 2001, he has made the campaign one of his focal points. Throughout the campaign, many contributions have come in to support faculty, scholarships, and research centers; others have focused specifically on the building. **Robert Rothman, '77**, gave \$12 million; **David Booth, '71**, pledged \$10 million, and **Peter May, AB '64, MBA '65**, committed \$5 million.

In two cases, donations of at least \$1 million have come in to name classrooms. **Clifford Asness, MBA '91, PhD '94**, named a classroom after **Gene Fama, MBA '63, PhD '64**, Robert R. McCormick Distinguished Service Professor of Finance. And 60 alumni who work at Credit Suisse First Boston, led by **Brady Dougan, AB '81, MBA '82**, and **Steven Koch, MBA '82, JD '82**, combined their efforts to name a classroom.

Support for the building has come from many organizations as well as individuals. The Kovler Family Foundation donated \$500,000, LaSalle Bank made a gift of \$150,000, and Molex gave \$100,000.

“This building will transform the GSB,” predicted Alper. “It will take what’s already great up to the next level.” ■