

# THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH CIVIC CENTER CONSERVATION PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2005

## Project Summary



Campus Heritage Grants are awarded by the Getty Foundation to assist United States colleges and universities in managing and preserving the integrity of their significant historic buildings, sites and landscapes.

This project, the Cathedral of Learning/Oakland Civic Center Conservation Study, provides a comprehensive architectural conservation assessment and preservation plan for a contiguous group of architecturally significant structures that comprise the heart of the University of Pittsburgh's campus. The University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning, a 42-story Gothic Revival building, is one of the best-known landmarks in Pittsburgh. The Cathedral, however, is just one part of a remarkable ensemble of buildings at the center of the campus, designed by Charles Z. Klauder from 1924-1938, which include the Stephen Foster Memorial, Heinz Memorial Chapel, and the Cathedral Grounds.

Important architectural components of the City of Pittsburgh-designated Oakland Civic Center Historic District, Campus Heritage Grant funds were used to assess the exterior and interior conditions of these historic structures and their significant landscapes, develop a comprehensive preservation manual for its facilities management division, and produce cost estimates for recommended conservation work.

An important goal of the Conservation Study is the incorporation of good preservation practices for historic resources into the standard operation of the University's Facilities Management Division, from the scale of a comprehensive building rehabilitation project to the curatorial treatment of historically-significant University facilities management archive materials. The project recommendations have been made available both in the form of this conservation manual, and as a PowerPoint presentation. Both tools will be used to train current and future facilities management staff in the conservation values that guided this study.

### Key Study Results & Innovations:

- Individualized Building Preservation Briefs
- Staff education and increased awareness
- A "100 year plan" for the Cathedral of Learning
- A definitive review of cleaning strategies for the Cathedral
- Archive improvement strategy
- Development and fundraising support
- Coordination with ongoing maintenance and budget planning

On this board are excerpts from the report and samples of the "Pitt Preservation Briefs" developed for the project. We believe this is the most innovative aspect of the project and could be emulated at other institutions with significant collections of historic structures.

## The Cathedral of Learning

This Gothic-Revival-style structure is a historic landmark, the second-tallest education building in the world. It is the geographic and traditional heart of the campus. The Cathedral contains many architecturally significant interiors including the Commons Room, the Babcock Meeting Room, the Croghan-Schenley Rooms, Braun Room and 26 Nationality Classrooms.

