Reflections on Progress at Work

School of Industrial and Labor Relations in Western New York
Purpose...

To improve industrial and labor conditions in the state through the provision of instruction, the conduct of research, and the dissemination of information in all aspects of industrial, labor, and public relations affecting employers and employees.

It is necessary that understanding of industrial and labor relations be advanced; that more effective cooperation among employers and employees and more general recognition of their mutual rights, obligations, and duties under the laws pertaining to industrial and labor relations in New York state be achieved; that means for encouraging the growth of mutual respect and greater responsibility on the part of both employers and employees be developed; and that industrial efficiency through the analysis of problems relating to employment be improved.

Legislation establishing New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University. State of New York, Laws of 1944, Chapter 162.

The School is committed to the honest and unbiased investigation, evaluation, and presentation of facts, and the development of the soundest possible understanding among employers, employees, and the public. It is not the School's job to take sides but to try to understand the reasons for differences and conflicts and to interpret them, and thereby, to contribute to better understanding of industrial and labor relations.

Edmund Ezra Day
President, Cornell University
1937-1949
Today, we enter our second half century, facing a new millennium of opportunity. We pause to celebrate with pride our ILR Extension heritage, from its roots in Buffalo. We pay tribute to colleagues before us and partners with us who have made this fifty years of progress at work.

It is a special honor to share these pages of history and this celebration with Lois Gray. As the first director of the first extension office, as ILR's Associate Dean for Extension and Public Service, and now as the Jean McKelvey-Alice Grant Professor of Labor-Management Relations, Lois is our guide and dear friend.

From this one visionary founder in an office in Buffalo, the Extension Division has grown to 75 faculty members. We work from five off-campus centers, New York City to Buffalo, with headquarters and another 60 resident faculty members on the Cornell campus in Ithaca.

Leading the way, ILR Extension has evolved, reflecting changing economic and workplace challenges. Programs in Buffalo continue to serve our community even as they address national and international needs. We remain true to our roots, and the ILR School is rooted in intelligent study and accommodation of different interests. It is education about methods of getting along, of bringing democracy and conflict resolution to the workplace, of promoting justice, dignity and productivity through work, of securing jobs and opportunity for everyone.

That is what we are still about. After fifty years, some things seem the same: we still face legislative, political and workplace struggles. Some things seem to go in cycles: we re-engineer products and technology, re-invent government and re-design work structures. But all things change, and the American workplace has been the site of profound changes—changes, we are often reminded, that are driven by competition for market success. We must contribute to that success and are very proud of our work in that area.

We also know that education must not lose focus on higher values. It cannot be wrought merely into a weapon in battles for material success. It must also promote creativity, enrichment, critical thinking and cooperation. Indeed, we must build better cars, computers and other commodities. We must also develop strong, honest, compassionate, sharing human beings and supporting, caring communities.

It's a big job, this Work in Progress, as our 50th anniversary slogan calls it. We are proud to share it with all of you—the people, the organizations and the communities with which we do the work.

Lou Jean Fleron
Director, Western Region
School of Industrial and Labor Relations
Cornell University

When the ILR School was established fifty years ago with a legislative charge to reach out to the labor and management community of New York State, founding faculty members made a serendipitous decision to open the first off-campus extension in Western New York. The strong concentration of steel, auto, chemical and electrical manufacturing along with construction, retail and service operations made Buffalo and surrounding communities one of the major industrial centers in the United States. Western New York, in the tense labor-management climate of 1946, had been the scene of major labor relations confrontations and was to become one of the pace setters in collective bargaining settlements. Its diverse working population also set precedents in challenging workplace barriers for minorities and women.

For ILR, the lure of Western New York was not only its strategic mix of industry and labor, but its network of educational and community organizations which were available for collaboration with ILR faculty in pioneering its extension mission. Outstanding extension faculty were recruited from the region's colleges and universities. Federal, state and city agencies offered counsel and outreach. The State Education Department gave office space and Buffalo State College provided classrooms. Active community organizations including the YWCA, Buffalo Council of Churches and various business service clubs sponsored programs. Most important, the chambers of commerce and the AFL and CIO central labor councils, though at war with each other at the time, endorsed ILR's role and sent representatives to serve on our advisory committee which provided both program ideas and recruitment. Building on this existing infrastructure and Western New York's volunteer spirit, ILR Extension was established, supplying the base for extending ILR throughout New York State.

The first Buffalo programs which featured ILR resident faculty as lecturers attracted hundreds of practitioners. Response reflected the climate of the times. When President Day received letters from managers contending that faculty seemed "pro-labor" along with letters from labor leaders who considered speakers to be "anti-labor," he concluded that ILR seemed to be striking the right balance. For fifty years, ILR Western Region staff have initiated training, research and educational programs to promote understanding of the issues in the industrial and labor relations field faithful to the mission of the founding legislators.

Lois Gray
Jean McKelvey-Alice Grant Professor of Labor-Management Relations
School of Industrial and Labor Relations
Cornell University
The 1940s and 1950s

Toward a Mutual Understanding of Labor and Management:

The Founding and Early Programs of Cornell ILR in Western New York

In the turmoil of the moment… let it not be forgotten that the future prosperity and happiness of the American people depend primarily upon our capacity successfully to get along with one another. This goal can be attained neither by government alone nor by labor alone nor by management alone nor by any other group or element in our economy acting alone; it cannot be reached by a combination of government and management or even labor and management acting alone; it can be achieved only by all of us voluntarily working together in the interests of the general welfare.

1946 Report, New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Industrial and Labor Conditions

Looking for Peace and Prosperity

In 1946 the U.S. surpassed all other nations in manufacturing and living standards. A war-time boom and post-war consumer demand fueled the national economy. As America converted to peace-time production, profits soared and employers and workers with their unions struggled over share of the bounty. The stage was set for a long period of sustained economic growth and prosperity for many Americans.

The School of Industrial and Labor Relations came to Buffalo in this era.

The State is Our Campus

The New York State Legislature created the School of Industrial and Labor Relations in 1944. Sponsored by State Senator Irving M. Ives, chair of the Joint Legislative Committee on Industrial and Labor Conditions, the legislation proposed to build mutual understanding between labor and management and to improve working conditions in New York. Fulfilling this mission required an approach emphasizing equally undergraduate and graduate education, research and the extension of industrial and labor relations programs for practitioners at the workplace.

The Founding

As a major industrial center, Buffalo was the clear first choice for an off-campus Extension office. In August 1946, ILR professors Maurice Neufeld and Jean McKelvey met at the Buffalo offices of the National Labor Relations Board with leaders of business, labor and government to plan the opening of an ILR Extension office in Western New York. They selected Lois Gray, an NLRB economist and field examiner, to be the director and made plans to open a new office at the State Education Department in downtown Buffalo.

From Public Lectures...

On September 30, 1946, the Western Region office inaugurated its first off-campus programs with a five-day lecture series at Buffalo State Teachers College. It covered general topics in industrial relations and drew a diverse audience.

Labor and management practitioners and the general public attended early Extension public lectures by the hundreds, establishing industrial education in this region and paving the way for Extension outreach throughout New York State.

To Classroom Education...

The Western Region soon created courses that went beyond lectures with classes in collective bargaining, contract negotiations, labor law, labor history and human relations. These courses, as well as parliamentary law, public speaking, conference leadership and supervisory training, were free and open to the public and generated a large response.

Core courses in collective bargaining, contract administration and leadership training became annual favorites and part of Extension's stock in trade. In its early years, Cornell established a tradition of educating workers,
Knowledge is the only instrument of production that is not subject to diminishing returns.

John Bates Clark
managers and government practitioners in the effective implementation of labor legislation.

To In-Service Training.

During its first decade Cornell ILR brought instruction to the workplace with a wide-ranging series of in-service training. Instruction included labor service programs for unions like the United Auto Workers, the United Steelworkers and the Chemical Workers. Management and supervisory training addressed the needs of companies such as Loblaw’s Groceries and Westinghouse and organizations like the New York State Society of Professional Engineers.

Courses in industrial relations and leadership also became popular for non-profit organizations, including hospitals and government agencies such as the New York State Department of Civil Service and the New York State Board of Education.

Early Faculty

Resident faculty from Ithaca frequently traveled to Western New York to present lectures and classes. With Lois Gray, these faculty created courses and customized training programs to meet the leadership and industrial relations needs of businesses and unions in Western New York.

As demand for courses and in-service programs grew, Gray recruited local instructors from among the ranks of local colleges and universities as well as labor, business and government. The University of Buffalo, Buffalo State Teachers College, the NLRB, Eastman Kodak, Carborundum, the United Auto Workers, the United Steelworkers, the New York State Department of Labor and the New York State Board of Mediation are just some of the organizations from which adjunct faculty were drawn.

Taking Care of Business: Early Partnerships

As director, Lois Gray fulfilled many roles - teacher, trainer and program administrator. Yet most significant for Extension, Gray established the roots and permanency of the Western Region by promoting programs, recruiting students and cultivating partners in the labor, management, government and academic communities.

Gray organized the Buffalo Labor Advisory Council in 1947. The Council brought together local trade union leaders to represent the interests of labor in decisions about Extension programs. She also cultivated contacts in the business community, reaching out to chambers of commerce in Erie, Niagara and surrounding counties.

School Program Helps Both Employe and Boss

By HARRY ELWOOD

PROBABLY no single organization in the Buffalo area has done a more effective job in its chosen field than the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations—a publicly-supported extension school administered by Cornell University.
Adjunct instructor Milton Goldberg taught labor relations to foremen and executives at Symington-Gould, a railway equipment manufacturer in Depew. In-house training was part of an agreement with the United Steelworkers and the Pattern Makers and of the company's overall plan "to make a better product, decrease costs, meet competition, maintain profits, provide job security for all...and make better employees."

The night shift crew in the Finishing Department at Symington-Gould take some time off to celebrate a co-worker's retirement in 1957.
The 1960s and 1970s
Social Transitions:
Education for Worker Rights, Safety and Health and Organizational Development

An Era of Social Progress
While the 1960s and 1970s brought rapid technological and product innovation, the true legacy of this era was significant social change. Women and minorities entered the workforce in record numbers and championed their rights at work and in the community. Unprecedented legislation addressed poverty and racial injustice, prohibited employment discrimination and protected health and safety on the job.

Businesses, unions and public agencies turned to Cornell for training to implement new legislation and develop skills to meet the challenges of the new workforce. Western Region programs took the lead throughout Western New York and, increasingly, the nation.

Innovations in...

Civil Rights Legislation...
For workers and their organizations, Cornell offered knowledge and skills for understanding the new civil rights legislation and providing equality on the job. The Western Region conducted training for civil rights committee representatives of many area unions.

The School sponsored a conference for management and labor practitioners in 1965 on the Civil Rights Act, the first of many Title VII programs that continue today.

Women at Work...
These decades marked an historic influx of women in the workforce and into leadership positions. In 1978 the Western Region created the Buffalo Women's Labor Education Advisory Council, providing a learning network for women in all occupations. An annual Fall Festival for Union Women built solidarity and developed leadership skills in union members across Western New York.

The following year the Women's Career Development certificate program began, offering women managerial skills for upward mobility. Courses included leadership, communications, organizational behavior and interpersonal dynamics. The program later expanded into Supervisory Studies for men and women.

Economic Development in Western New York...
Programs on economic development, like many other Western Region initiatives, benefited from the resources of the School’s Ithaca-based resident faculty. Leading scholars continue to contribute teaching and research expertise. In 1964 Cornell brought together state and local leaders from labor and management to examine the region’s economic future. The first conference, “The Buffalo-Niagara Area: Its

Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller addresses Cornell’s 1965 Civil Rights Act Conference in Buffalo.

The Great Society rests on abundance and liberty for all. It demands an end to poverty and racial injustice, to which we are totally committed in our time.

Lyndon B. Johnson
Problems and Prospects,” led to new business initiatives by companies like Roblin Steel. Each decade since, Cornell has hosted such non-partisan gatherings, including the “Business Climate of New York State” in 1975 and “Focus on Buffalo’s Economic Future” in 1983.

**Public Sector Unionization...**

The enactment of the Taylor Law in 1967 ushered in an era of unionization for state, county and municipal employees in New York State. This period saw huge growth in the organization of teachers, police, firefighters and workers at all levels of government.
Cornell presented workshops on the Taylor Law, often in association with the Public Employment Relations Board. From the 1960s through the present day, Cornell has provided training to advance progress in public sector labor relations.

In 1962 when federal employees were guaranteed the right to bargain collectively under President Kennedy's Executive Order 10988, Cornell initiatives addressed collective bargaining and unionization rights for U.S. government workers.

Management Development...

Richard Pivetz brought to Cornell practical expertise from his experience as a General Motors manager and University of Buffalo faculty member. During his 26-year career as director of the Western District, Pivetz established far-reaching management programs and nurtured expanded relationships with chambers of commerce, management clubs and labor-management groups throughout the eight-county region. Under his directorship, Cornell delivered extensive in-service training for the American Institute of Banking, Marine Midland and other financial institutions, among many employers.

Certificate Programs for Workers and Their Unions...

During the 1970s Cornell created labor certificate programs, contributing to the advancement of union leadership in our community. Buffalo Labor Studies (BLS) was founded in 1972 under the extraordinary guidance of Jeannette Watkins, a dedicated labor educator. The program brought excellence in union education to members, officers, staff and supporters. Buffalo Labor Studies began offering college credit two years later, marking a milestone for Western Region programs.

Railroad Labor Studies, which began in 1974, brought industry-specific education to hundreds of railroad workers. Graduates of all Cornell labor programs continue to gain a strong foundation in the liberal arts and broad understanding of industrial relations, to advance the goals of the labor movement.

Safety and Health...

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 promoted job safety awareness across the country. Cornell developed basic training as well as specialized in-service and college-credit programs on topics such as machine safety, industrial hygiene, nutrition and cancer prevention. The School helped establish community councils on occupational safety and health and offered workshops bringing together workers, their unions and non-profit groups with public health professionals, industrial hygienists and physicians.
Labor-Management Cooperation.

The Jamestown Labor-Management Committee, established in 1972 by Mayor Stan Lundine, was a first in the nation. Cornell's early programs promoting cooperative relations in collaboration with the Jamestown committee, and later in Erie and Niagara counties, developed into the wide range of courses and technical assistance the School offers today.

Jeannette Watkins, Dick Pivotz and adjunct faculty member John Collins meet with advisory committee to build Railroad Labor Studies.

Unique Buffalo Program to Offer Area Railroaders Chance to Study

By ED KELLY
News Labor Reporter

The Buffalo Railroad Labor Studies Program — first of its kind in the United States — will be inaugurated here on Oct. 2 by the Western District Extension Division of Cornell University's State School of Industrial & Labor Relations.

Buffalo Evening News September 4, 1974
The 1980s and 1990s

Competing in a Global Economy: Expanded Challenges of Workplace Change

Continuing Our Mission

The challenges of international competition brought distress to Western New York in the 1980s. The livelihood of thousands of working families was in jeopardy as the basic manufacturing base crumbled. Western New Yorkers faced economic insecurity with characteristic determination. While industrial employment declined in the 1980s, economic opportunity expanded in education, health care, high technologies and service industries. In the 1990s there is ample evidence of workplace success in all sectors of the Western New York economy.

Cornell continues its historic mission of fostering mutual understanding while keeping pace with economic and social change. The rise of multinationals and global competition, the demand for a higher skilled workforce, increasing workforce diversity and declining union density present ongoing challenges. Western Region programs in these times have expanded to meet these challenges with a growing number of partners.

Fostering Mutual Understanding Through...

Working Together Differently...

After nearly a decade of increasing worker involvement in the workplace, the 1980s saw a dramatic increase in ways of working together. During these times, Western New York enhanced its reputation as a leading site for labor-management cooperation.

The Western Region collaborated with unions and companies in this progress, facilitating the work of the Niagara County Labor-Management Council and the Western New York Employee Involvement Council. For the Western New York Economic Development Corporation, the Western Region conducted research on five local case studies of cooperative labor-management relations. That report concluded, “taken together, these cases demonstrate the innovation, creativity and pragmatic ability of labor and management in Western New York to meet new challenges.”

A variety of innovative Cornell programs promote the understanding of workplace cooperation. They teach practical methods of advancing the quality of work life while increasing productivity. Often with New York State support, the Western Region and Cornell’s Programs for Employment and Workplace Systems delivered conferences and courses on high performance workplaces. Many workplaces across Western New York have profited from technical assistance and public workshops on mutual gains, on the principles and implementation strategies of interest-based bargaining.

Recent Cornell programs on alternative dispute resolution teach negotiation skills for problem solving as well as more traditional means of third-party conflict resolution, mediation, fact-finding and arbitration.
Supervisory Training...

In this era of rapid economic, technological and social change, new work relationships demand different management approaches. Cornell's college-credit certificate program in Supervisory Studies gives practitioners an edge in motivating employees, leading teams and managing quality initiatives while advancing their careers.

Supervisory Studies students represent a wide range of local employers, including Wilson Greatbatch, IMAK, Columbus McKinnon, Wendel, Leica, Buffalo China, NYNEX, National Fuel Gas, Niagara Mohawk, the Veterans Administration Medical Center, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, the Erie County Medical Center and Buffalo General, Children's, South Buffalo and Kenmore Mercy hospitals. Graduates of this college-credit program have become leaders in many organizations in the local management community, contributing to the progress of public agencies and some of the area's most successful companies.

Labor Education...

Buffalo Labor Studies continues to provide comprehensive labor education to members and leaders of...
Labor-management relations wins work for plant

By JAMES T. MADORE
News Business Reporter

More than a dozen years of cooperation between labor and management at General Motor Corp.'s Town of Tonawanda Engine Plant was instrumental for it in winning the production work for the automaker's new "world engine," executives and union leaders said Tuesday.

Organized labor in a college-credit certificate program. BLS boasts more than 500 graduates since 1974, many of them active leaders in the community. Non-credit labor programs also serve the labor movement by training workers and unions in many areas of union leadership and labor relations. From stewards training to a vast array of specialized courses, unions throughout the region depend upon Cornell for labor education.

In the 1980s and 90s partnerships with labor focus on the latest workplace challenges and innovative outreach. In cooperation with Cornell labor programs, the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 17, USWA Local 593, and Region 9 of the UAW initiated a weekly labor radio show, Prospering in America, which is now heard in three states.

Presidents of major unions, Doug Fraser, United Auto Workers; Morton Bahr, Communications Workers of America; and Lynn Williams, United Steelworkers of America, have participated in Western Region labor programs in the 1990s as part of Cornell ILR's Labor Leader in Residence Program.

Industry Studies...

As the 1980s competitive crisis struck the automobile industry, leaders of the United Auto Workers and auto companies in Western New York began working together to save jobs. In 1986, Cornell's newly created Institute for Industry Studies, UAW Local 846 and the General Motors Forge in Tonawanda designed an education program focusing on automobile industry trends and economic change. The Automotive Industry in Transition soon became the model for programs at the Saginaw Division Axle Plant, Harrison Radiator, Rochester Products and continue throughout the UAW-GM organizations today.

Automotive industry education programs expanded to include the UAW and the Ford Buffalo Stamping Plant. In 1991 the Institute for Industry Studies was chosen to develop the automotive industry studies for all employees of the Ford Motor Company, an ongoing national program. Recent initiatives include education on quality in the auto industry for American Axle and Manufacturing with the UAW and IAM.

As part of a bold competitive strategy, the United Steelworkers of America Local 593 and Outokumpu American Brass have worked with the Institute since 1990 to create three copper and brass industry education programs for their workforce. Now ranking among the top copper and brass mills in the world, Outokumpu and Local 593 are setting the pace in workforce development, labor-management innovation, and productivity in their industry.

Today, Cornell proudly celebrates the success of all our partners in these workplace-transforming education programs. The automobile industry in Western New York has emerged on the leading edge, winning new world engine contracts, hiring many new workers, and investing in new technologies. Through the Institute's auto industry education programs, 11,000 auto workers, the great majority of those in Western New York, have extensively studied the international auto industry and applied their understanding to their own work.
Economic Policy and Education...

"Focus on Buffalo's Economic Future" carried on Cornell's traditional public exploration of local economic development in a 1983 series co-sponsored with The Buffalo News and the Industrial Relations Research Association. Governor Mario Cuomo was among the featured speakers.

In the 1990s Cornell's conferences on economic progress addressed not only local but international issues. With Region 9 of the UAW, the Institute for Industry Studies held three leadership conferences on the global economy. Economists and union representatives came to Buffalo from Poland, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden and across the U.S. to discuss wage and labor concerns.

In 1992, Governor Cuomo appointed the director of the Institute for Industry Studies to the New York
Telecommunications Exchange. The Exchange brought together policy makers, academics, and industry, labor and consumer representatives to develop state strategy for telecommunications. The Institute's research on work and employment in the telecommunications industry was a part of the Exchange's report to the Governor.

**Safety and Health in the Workplace...**

The 1980s brought increased awareness and understanding of how to promote safety and health on the job. OSHA and New York State laws such as the Right-to-Know Act and Public Employees Safety and Health Act introduced new protections. Continuing epidemiological studies identified various workplace dangers as the cause of illness and established connections to long-term exposure on the job.

In 1986 Cornell founded CHIP, the Chemical Hazard Information Program, to offer employers, unions and workers technical assistance and training to prevent work-related disease and accidents. The program addresses issues ranging from chemical exposure and repetitive motion injury to AIDS prevention and stress reduction—with a comprehensive array of services focusing on regulatory standards, communication plans, technical training and legal issues affecting public and private sectors.

In recent years, CHIP courses have included indoor air quality, reproductive hazards, workplace violence, product substitutions, improved ergonomic design and developing new behaviors that reduce risk and improve health. It has addressed the unique educational needs of hairdressers, metal workers, machinists and waste water workers, among others. CHIP annually performs more than 200 technical assistance services for improved workplace safety.

**Reaching Out, Looking Ahead...**

The size and nature of employers on the Western New York landscape began to change in the 1980s and 90s, signaling a shift in needs for workplace education. Cornell’s Community Workforce Development, founded in 1994, has sponsored programs for partners not traditionally served by the School. Courses and on-site training cover interpersonal dynamics, communication and problem-solving for a variety of organizations—from small business and non-profits to public schools. The program has provided innovative programs from legal requirements for employing teenage workers to Secretaries Day seminars to a conference on workplace issues of gays and lesbians that addressed strategies for achieving equality on the job and changing organizational culture.

**Higher Education for a High-Skills Era...**

Since 1990, the Western Region's Graduate Studies in Labor Relations serves area practitioners with a 15-credit certificate program of advanced study in labor relations and human resource management.

**Workplace Diversity Initiatives...**

Changes in the composition of the nation's workforce are increasingly seen in Western New York.
Individuals and organizations face the challenges of age, gender, physical ability, national origin, sexual orientation, family and cultural diversity at work.

Cornell programs assist employers, workers and unions in recognizing the value of an empowered, diverse workforce and in successfully implementing policies and programs in workplace diversity to build stronger organizations. In cooperation with the Theatre for Change, interactive theater educational workshops were delivered for The Buffalo News, Buffalo State College, Auto Alliance International, NCR, the U.S. Immigration Service and other organizations to promote understanding and harmonious working relationships among members of diverse groups.

In 1994 the School founded the nationwide Workforce Diversity Network in conjunction with The National Conference. Through program newsletters, conferences and on-line networks managers from the U.S. Postal Service, Duracell USA, Talbots, Hearst Business Publishing, Atlantic Richfield and other organizations share best practices in diversity management and organizational change.
With appreciation...

Spcial thanks extended to the people who have contributed to the creation of this commemorative book, including:

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Shared recollections

Contributors including...


As well as...

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Dean's Faculty and staff of Cornell CLA Western Region over 50 years
Two hundred creative, committed advocates who make up the vibrant fabric of the Western Region.

Cornell D.R. in Western New York

Faculty

Louis Jean Berger
Director, Western Region and Institute for Industry Studies
Susan Woods
Senior Information Associate, Puerto DeMentor
Young Hobbs
Director, Community Workforce Development
Molly Brown
Director, Chemical Health Information Program
Alex Blair
Director, Future Programs
Paul Fiedler
Director, Management and Supervisory Studies
Charles Whalen
Director, Residency Institute
Dennis Lampagos
Director, Labor Management

Staff

Victoria Valenti
Assistant to the Director of Western Region
Mackenzie Gardiner
Program Manager
Betty Ziering
Administrative Manager
Jeanette D'Elia
Research & Administrative Aide
Shelley Ray
Administrative Assistant
Neil Beach
Design/Systems Administrator

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A prohibits view of Buffalo, a city for the story of President John F. Kennedy at Niagara Square, Buffalo, 1963

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