This issue of Columbia Engineering magazine focuses on engineering and applied science alumni who are entrepreneurs and whose work is making an impact, locally, nationally, and globally. Because of space limitations, we can highlight only a small fraction of our entrepreneurial graduates.

These men and women, and others like them, exemplify the wide range of entrepreneurial enterprises made possible by a Columbia Engineering education. In these pages you will find businesses that run the gamut from technological products and patented processes to theft-proof clothing design. I am sure you will find this sampling of alumni stories both interesting and inspiring.

As you may know from reading about New York City’s challenge to institute a new applied sciences campus here, the City is committed to creating and fostering a climate of high-tech entrepreneurship that will spark new start-ups to drive a new economic engine for the City. We at Columbia Engineering have been engaged in technological innovation since the early days of King's College. The steam ferry and locomotive engines developed by John Stevens, Class of 1768, are among the first examples of our inventive alumni. This legacy of innovation has been present through every generation of Columbia alumni, as our graduates have helped to shape technology breakthroughs that have affected daily life during their era and into the future.

We are creating a new educational paradigm that includes an entrepreneurship component and have developed a minor in entrepreneurship, offering 17 courses in the schools of Engineering, Business, and Arts & Sciences. In addition, we have many co-curricular programs to appeal to the fledgling entrepreneur, including the annual PitchFest, where students vie for funding for their inventive products and services.

At the beginning of this academic year, we offered students a unique opportunity to be in an entrepreneurial atmosphere, 24/7. We launched the Entrepreneurship Residential Initiative, popularly called Res. Inc., as a living-learning module in Hartley and Wallach Halls. Res. Inc. provides an environment for students to collaborate, develop programs and products, identify potential markets, and promote ideas as entrepreneurs. You can read more about this program, and the entrepreneurial alumni who are making it possible, Alessandro Piol ’79, MS’82 and Alexandra Piol ’79, MS’83, on the inside back cover.

As New York City seeks to develop greater opportunities for entrepreneurs, I know that more and more of our Columbia Engineering alumni will be ready to bring their ideas to market, providing us with solutions to many of the challenges that face us today and tomorrow.

Fentisky Peña-Mora
Dean and Morris A. and Alma Schapiro Professor